VOLUME 1 AUGUST 98 ISSUE 4

NEW AGE GAMING SOUTH AFRICA

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ED's Note

Hello Gamers

Phew, what a month it was with the August issue being jam packed with an incredible 33 reviews in total spanning our glossy pages. That is a South African record considering we are the only magazine totally developed in South Africa and that we hold the record in the first place with our June issue. Not to blow our own trumpet, but we do manage to cram it all in, don't we?

An interesting August month started off with very little activity in the industry and it seemed like we were to disappoint again with too few reviews. But towards the middle of the month we became swamped with a mixed bag of titles that range from the lowest ever NAG score, Spawn with 49%, and an exciting release from Codemasters Colin McRae Rally that impressed the pants off me and received a whopping 91% and my Editors Choice. Even though there were not many other titles that could hit the magic 90 mark, we did uncover a few that impressed our review staff enough to be given our Merit Award. Those titles include the PC games Might & Magic VI and Commando's. On the PlayStation side we have Vigilante 8, the moving glands of Dead or Alive and the surprise package of Everybody's Golf. Not a bad month considering September is normally the big release month.

To back up the review section, I have concluded my E3 Report Back in this issue. As you can well see I worked hard to bring you the most comprehensive feedback on this amazing Expo. I will be winging my way to the ECTS show in September and you can expect much of the same. With the majority of the titles that were shown at E3 nearing their completion, ECTS (6-8 September) will be an opportune time to respond on their progress and hopefully bring back more full products than demo's.

By the time most of you read this issue the Starcraft Competition will have been completed and a Strategy Champion will be mingling around the country. I just want to say that more and more opportunities are being created by the advent of these Competitions and your support, whether you are playing or not, will be much appreciated by the organises and New Age Gaming staff. It is also a good incentive to actually start gaming clubs or groups, so that preparing for Tournaments is easier by way of practising for the big events. We have also officially launched the NAG Classifieds section of the magazine, so most of the club leaders can advertise their worth and hopefully increase memberships across the country. You can also advertise your older games and equipment to the majority of the gaming public, creating a mini swop or bargain buy market for you gamers.

At NAG we are striving to make gaming the leading industry in the entertainment field, I know its a tall order but if you have goals and dreams, they can always be realised if you try hard enough. Use New Age Gaming Magazine as an example and you can see that anything dreams and gaming do come true.
Thanks for supporting our Local Magazine and I'll see you all again next month. GAME AWAY.

The Ed

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NAG July Competition Winners

CONGRATULATIONS from everyone here at NAG goes out to

Lucien Barnes from Pretoria
MHP Burrows from Bothasig

Both of you have won yourselves a Resident Evil 2 bundle consisting of your very own Resident Evil 2 PSX game, PlayStation wristwatch and Resident Evil 2 T-Shirt and Cap thanks to Ster Kinekor Interactive.

Creative Labs 3D Blaster: Voodoo2 Correction

CREATIVE

Last month there was a small communication error between NAG and Creative Labs South Africa. I have been informed that there is a 3 year warranty on the 3D Blaster Voodoo2 and not a 12 month warranty as stated in our review of the product in our Hardware Hype section.
We apologise to all 3D Blaster Voodoo2 owners who might have been upset by the mistake. A long and hard debate was had on re-evaluating the score we gave, but after much deliberation we decided the score was justified and will remain unchanged.

Sound Blaster LIVE! Coming In September

Environmental Audio™

Creative Labs is launching their environmental audio technology in August. The product being introduced is the Sound Blaster Live! and our Editor will be going to Singapore for the launch.
The card is powered by the powerfull EMU10K1 processor consisting of 2 million transistors and operating at 1,000+ MIPS. The Live! will officially be launched in September here in South Africa.

New Development Title From Terminal Reality

Terminal Reality, makers of Monster Truck Madness 2 has announced that they will be developing a flight sim in the same vain as Flight Unlimited 2 and MS Flight Simulator. It will cover the San Francisco, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles and New York areas and will use the Photex3 engine. There will also be support for all the popular 3D hardware APIs. Some of Fly!'s more interesting features will include added realism by adding the use of the official government broadcast system and the real time of day and the passage of time. This will allow flight fans to see the sun go down, moon come up and different star constellations at night.
Expect Fly! Sometime around Christmas.

Classified Section of NAG Open for Business

As promised we are going to open a Classifieds section in NAG. We will start of with two pages dedicated to this section a month and see how things go from there. Below is the submission form for anybody that wants to sell hardware or games and readers can even put information on upcoming events like LAN parties, Clan Meetings etc.
This service is only available for personal use and not intended for any Commercial entity to advertise their products. We will not place any such submissions received. Make copy of the below form and fax it to us at 011 869-0462 or email all the relevant information to classifieds@nag.co.za. Please tick the appropriate box for your type of submission and the text for it has to be 30 words or less.

NAG Classifieds

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☐ Hardware / ☐ Software / ☐ Event Info
☐ Club Info / ☐ Other .....

#Quake Finds New Home

Come join NAG staff on the new home of #quake since it was banned from ZANet. The new address is ender.phun.net: 6667. There are currently 100+ members and new people are joining every day. #Quake is fun place to meet and chat to online gamers (yes even non-quakers). Remember that the channel can become crazy at times so don't take anything said personally, most of it is in jest and the IRC-Ops will ban your host and/or complete domain if you start nuking or insulting everyone.

StarCraft Sells 1 Million Units

STARCRAFT

StarCraft has sold an amazing 1 Million copies since it was released to the public and has retained the number one spot in sales for the last 3 months.
Blizzard is expecting strong sales for the remainder of the year and currently has a good reason to celebrate.
Now where is that champagne bottle, time to party!

PlayStation 2 Under Development

SCEI executive VP Ken Kutaragi confirmed that the next generation PlayStation is under development in Tokyo. Unfortunately they haven't released any specifications yet and they are sketchy at best. There is rumours about a possible 20x DVD-ROM drive, 400Mhz RISC Processor, and that the PlayStation 2 will be backward compatible with current titles. If this is the case we can look forward to an exceptional console from Sony.
There is also some rumours that it might be released by Christmas '99, if this is the case the Dreamcast can look forward to some serious competition.
SCEA Executive VP Kaz Hirai also commented that Sony would only announce the PlayStation 2 officially when they feel the appropriate time has arrived.
Expect some official information and specifications the closer we get to the launch of the Dreamcast.

3D RPG From Sony Coming Soon

Scheduled for release sometime in the 4th quarter is Sony Interactive 3D RPG game Legend of the Legaia. This announcement follows hot on the trail of the announcement of Final Fantasy VIII. It will take place in a futuristic setting where the state of the world is turning worse. Humans as always have been neglecting to take care of the planet and curious events start to occur. A strange mist starts to blanket the earth, and wherever it goes people turn into killers, and monsters appear from the shadows.
A couple of young heroes emerge to confront the situation, each with his/her own style of kempo and set out to discover the mystery behind the mist.
One of Legend of Lagaia's interesting features is found in the battle interface code named T.A.S. or Tactical Arts System. According to SCEI it will look like a fighting game, similar to the likes of Street Fighter.
It sounds like an interesting game and I hope we here in South Africa will get to have a look at it as well, but unfortunately there is no word of a local release date as of yet.

AD&D Core Rules 2.0 Coming In October

Good news for avid Advanced Dungeon & Dragon players, Wizards of the Coast Inc. and TSR Inc. announced the scheduled release of AD&D Core Rules version 2.0 sometime in October '98. Dungeon Masters and players will find this CD an invaluable tool. It has nine AD&D text books with full search capability, player generator software that features all Player's Option rules and automates NPC creation, two map makers, fully customisable monster and treasure tables as well as a handy dice roller.

Blizzard Employees Goes AWOL

A group of ten employees has left Blizzard and some of them will be starting their own development studio. One of those employees is none other than James Phinney, a producer and designer of StarCraft. The other employees include a programmer, several artists and Blizzard's webmaster. At the time they where working on several projects for Blizzard.
According to Blizzard the departure of their employees will not affect the development of Diablo II and Brood War and they are still on schedule. Unfortunately WarCraft II Platinum will be delayed and the companies web site might not be updated for a while.
Blizzard wishes the group the best of luck but will not be pursuing any deals with them.

PGL Makes Ready For Its Third Season

AMD PROFESSIONAL GAMERS' LEAGUE

The Professional Gamers League is getting ready to kick off its third season. Quake II and StarCraft features this time round for the action and strategy categories. They will not be using TEN this time for the preliminary rounds and the StarCraft qualification will take place on Blizzard's Battle.net service.
The most important for entrants is the fact that the prizes have been given a boost. A whopping $20,000 will be handed to the winners of the action and strategy category. Team players competing in the Quake Clan arena can look forward to $70,000 in cash and $30,000 in prizes. Pity we don't have anyhing like this in South Africa.

I HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED THIS EDITION OF BITS & BYTES. WE HOPE TO HEAR YOUR OPINIONS AND SUGGESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO IMPROVE THIS SECTION. IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS PLEASE E-MAIL ME AT BB@NAG.CO.ZA
LEONARD DIAMOND - ASSISTANT EDITOR

WIN COMPETITION WIN

NEW AGE GAMING SOUTH AFRICA

WIN

Multimedia Warehouse

Due to the enormous success of Unreal and CARMAGEDDON, Multimedia Warehouse and New Age Gaming are giving away to 5 lucky winners a copy of each game. Just answer two easy questions.

5x2

1) In this issue of NAG, how many reviewed titles are distributed by Multimedia Warehouse?
2) Which is the best South African gaming magazine? (Clue: its the only mag entirely produced in SA, Eeerr YA.)

Send your answer on a postcard to
Unreal Carmageddon/NAG Competition
PO Box 2749, Alberton, 1449
or E-Mail the answer to comp@nag.co.za

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Alberton, 1449.

10 TOP GAMES

With July normally being a slow month when it comes to new releases, gamers flock to the stores and stock up on their favourite warez. From now on we all wait in antisipation for the hoardes of titles that come after the E3 Expo. But for now there is one king on the PC, Starcraft. It has just hit the magic Million Mark in total sales and is taking SA by storm (hehe). So with those kind of figures what will challenge it's superiority. Well, World Cup 98 is still reverberating, even after the World Cup finished it knocks on the top slot. Unreal just misses out on a higher spot but with the strong following it is gathering we should see it move up a notch or two next month. The titles starting to faulter slightly are Tomb Raider 2, which has impressed everybody with its long lifespan, and Battlezone slips off the charts after spending one month in the spotlight. An interesting addition to the charts is Carmageddon, seems like we enjoy running people over. Oh yes, this is S.A. Finally there is a new PSX king in the form of World Cup 98 and Final Fantasy VII slips three places to number four due to the pressures put on it by the quality titles Gran Turismo and RE2. The racing genre holds strong in the rough and tough world of gaming with TOCA and the newbie Need for Speed 2. I'm sure we will see a new addition to this genre pushing hard for number one with the release of Colin McRae Rally, but that remains to be seen if you gamers support it next month. Another new entry is Forsaken from Acclaim and looks like a PSX favourite. The E3 rush begins so send in those votes.
Let the games begin, Cheers.

LM = Position Last Month TM = Total Months on chart

PC

	NAME	LM	TM
1.	Starcraft	1	3
2.	World Cup 98	3	1
3.	Unreal	5	1
4.	Age of Empire	4	4
5.	Tomb Raider 2	2	4
6.	Quake 2	9	4
7.	TOCA Touring Car	7	4
8.	Cricket 97	8	1
9.	Carmageddon	new	new
10.	Flight Sim 98	new	new

PLAYSTATION

	NAME	LM	TM
1.	World Cup 98	5	1
2.	Gran Turismo	2	3
3.	Resident Evil 2	4	3
4.	Final Fantasy 7	1	4
5.	Crash Bandicoot 2	3	4
6.	TOCA Touring Car	7	1
7.	Tomb Raider 2	6	4
8.	Soulblade	10	4
9.	Need for Speed 3	new	new
10.	Forsaken	new	new

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67.7 Diamond Monster 3D II (8MB)
64.3 Creative Labs Graphics Blaster Voodoo2 (12MB)

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CYBER STORM COMPUTERS

BACKCHAT

PO Box 2749
Alberton
1449

letters@nag.co.za

Thank you to everybody who wrote in. Unfortunately we cannot reply to all of them, but we do read them all. We now have an e-mail address dedicated to the letters section. The address is stated above. If you utilise the e-mail you are almost guaranteed a reply. Congratulations to Wayne Roberts, who wins a copy of the amazing Colin McRae Rally on the Playstation.

Please include your name and postal address with your letter so we can forward your prize should you win. Any winners without the above shall forfeit the prize and the Editor's cupboard will collect another game (Damn not this month :Ed). The prize cannot be changed for cash or any other product. The Editor's decision is final and that's that.

Dear NAG
I think it's great to finally have a S.A. mag, with both Playstation and computer combined, as I have both machines. I own an American playstation and would like to ask a few questions!
Could NAG please include an American (misc) side of the Playstation previews!
Is it possible maybe in your next mag to show all moves and fatalities for Mortal Kombat Trilogy for computer, as I need this badly!
P.S. congrats on your mag and hope that the great price stay the same!

Jason Fuchs
Mulbarton

Hi Jason
We are currently building up close relationships with our S.A. Distributors who are for the most part working hard to improve the market. PSX NTSC games in S.A. don't help grow the market because only key sectors receive a benefit from them. I'm not saying we will never support the format, but we S.A's have had to bow down to the overseas market for long enough, with NAG things are going to change.
The cheats for MK Trilogy eluded our previous issues, mainly because there are to many to publish, we working on it.
Ed

Dear NAG
Congratulations and thanks for an amazing and entertaining magazine. Although I don't own a Playstation or PC. I buy NAG simply because it has interesting and has quality articles.
The mag itself is very cheap, compared to overseas mags. I hope that Nag will remain in S.A. for many years to come. As long as you guys (and gals) at NAG keep up the good work.
I will always support NAG!

Best wishes
Shanshi Dhulam
Nigel

Hi Shanshi
Interesting that you don't own a gaming machine, I don't quite understand why, but I'm sure you'll be rectifying the problem soon. Thanks for purchasing NAG, we appreciate all the support we get.
Ed

Dear NAG
Just the other day, I went to C.N.A. to buy my monthly Gaming mag (I won't mention the name to avoid cries of defeat). I had it in my hands, paging through it, when I heard your mag calling out for me from the far shelf. I dropped my mag, reached out for New Age Gaming. I took it and never looked back. I took it home and read it for hours. The next day I showed it to all my friends and man, were they impressed!
P.S. keep up the good work. And if you decide to introduce a cover disk, may I suggest it to be Playstation Format.

Andrew Komar
Benoni

Hi Andrew
Thanks for the suggestions and the support. We will fight, for your right, to play games!
Ed

Hi NAG
from the DIE HARD GAMER once again, if you don't remember me I wrote a letter to you on the 8th of June congratulating you on your hugely successful gaming magazine. Since then I've bought your second issue and you still deliver the excellent gaming reviews which you are renowned for. I certainly like your Intense Under Construction Preview on UNREAL. I wouldn't even doubt that it will be the real Quake killer, because graphically it totally kicks Quake and Quake 2's butts fair and square. At my previous high school we had Quake on a network in our computer center and I didn't like playing it, because my network games often crash and it took approximately 9 minutes to correct the error before we could even start again. I dislike Quake 2 and its predecessor and I personally think that even Duke 3D's attitude beats them both hands down. Now with UNREAL on the horizon it can only perfect the faith that was lost in Quake especially the stupid AI. We salute UNREAL for its 3D engine and the smart AI which makes up for a whole new gaming experience.
If you ever need any Playstation or PC cheats you can always rely on me, because every week I can get PC or Playstation cheats with ease. I've always wanted to work for a gaming magazine as a Cheats expert; I would really like such an opportunity because gaming is a part of my life for the past 11 years. I would like it if you take my application in consideration and I will also include some of my hottest cheats on any genre for you. I am very tired now and must get some sleep. Until next month keep up the good work and don't forget about the Cover CD.

Leon van der Linde
16 years old
Bloemfontein

Hi Leon
Certain topics from your letter I won't even comment on for fear of a slow painful death (re: Quake) but I will agree that Unreal rocks big time. If you have cheats lying around that you would like to share with the rest of S.A., then please send them in.
It seems like the lack of sleep syndrome is not only restricted to the NAG office.
Ed

Dear NAG
The first issue was really good; I like the way that you have put everything in categories. I also love the cheats (please put in the cheats for Tomb Raider2 and Grand Theft Auto). The front cover looks very good and the mag is very colourful. Please would you consider a page for ads! I vote that Tomb Raider2 is no.1 for the top ten on the PC list. Can you also organise a competition in Amanzimtoti near Durban, as I can't get to the competition in Joburg? I don't really want a cover CD as I get board with it.

Good luck
[illegible]
Amanzimtoti

Dear NAG

Can a game be too long?
My answer is yes, I do think a game can be too long. For instance, take a game like Tomb2. It is really fun, but its about a week's worth of the same old crap. You run all the way to the end of the level, jumping over pits and climbing over rocks to get a key to open a door back on the other end of the level, only to go and do more of the same. It seems that everything you do in the game you can predict, because it has already happened to you or at least something similar to it.
However, I do think Tomb Raider is a good game. It is probably one of my best games besides Gran Turismo and Resident Evil2. But TR2 can't even compare to RE2, which gives as much gameplay as Tomb2, because when you beat the game with each character, you get another game for him/her. And if you beat the game a certain way, you get a new character. So when you finally beat RE2, you want to play it more because it is so addictive. What I am trying to say is that a game doesn't have to be long to offer great gameplay. Games that are long run out of fresh ideas, so they have to throw the same kind of things at you again and again. In my opinion, long games have bad qualities that are hidden by the fact that the game has great graphics or fresh ideas, and to me the gameplay comes first.

Wayne Roberts
Pietermaritzburg

Hi Wayne
I enjoyed your insight into gaming and agree with your point to a certain extent. Continuity is an important facet when it comes to value for money. R400.00 worth of game should keep you coming back for more time and again, but overall gameplay determines the enjoyment you'll receive from the title. Combine these two elements and you normally have the perfect formula for a classic, a rare, yet reachable pinnacle for any developer. Ed

BACKCHAT
PO Box 2749
Alberton
1449

Hi PJ
We hope to cover every single cheat for games currently in the market, a tall order but we will be boosting our cheat section.
As for a competition being held in Amanzimtoti, it might not be exactly situated in the suburb, but I'm sure Durban might suffice, unfortunately nothing is planned for the near future, but we will be stopping by to support the gaming fraternity in Kwazulu Natal if competitions pop up.
Ed

Dear NAG
Hi there! I'm one of your best fans along with countless others and have read your first and second issue from cover to cover twice and enjoyed it everytime. I love your Top Ten, Reviews and Previews your competitions and your cheats. I really enjoyed the Starcraft Terran Strategy Guide, your Bits and Bytes and Hardware Hype are excellent. I feel more confident about the products you advertise cause your guys give an honest opinion and don't rate products depending on how much cash they will pay you.
One of my favourite parts about your second issue besides everything is your Multiplayer Mayhem and Electronic Hideaways. If it weren't for your excellent, high-quality, ass kicking, low cost, South African mag I'd have to use all my allowance to get a $#%&! up outdated overseas piece of #*&! I love all types of PC games from strategy to sports. I'd also like to ask if you could put in a bit more about the web. Thanks for the best mag ever (just wish I could frame them).

Pedro Dos Passos
Roseltenville

Hi Pedro
We might disappoint you this month because we have left out our Multi Mayhem and Electronic Hideaway sections because of my extensive E3 section, but they will be back next time in their full glory. I see you are a similar gamer to me, I also enjoy all types of electronic games, even puzzles (hey, I'm addicted).
Ed

Dear NAG
When I first saw NAG I knew this would be a brilliant mag. The cover is great and so are the reviews, not to mention everything else. I am a gamer that is in a wheelchair from birth. I play a lot of PC games and I find some harder than others to play because of my disability, but hey I still KICK SOME ASS. I was wondering if you know any other guys with a similar situation as me so maybe we could make up a club or arrange a Quake competition, something like you held at Sandton City but on a much smaller scale. I would really appreciate if something could be arranged. The only suggestion I have for the mag is to extend the web section. Keep up the good work guys.

Shawn Arde
Mulbarton

Hey there Shawn
Thanks for taking time out of your busy gaming schedule to write us. We are starting the classified section of the NAG and you will soon hear of any clubs opening in your area, so check out your exclusive Aug NAG issue.
Ed

To NAG
I was looking in a Playstation Store and came across your mag. I was overwhelmed. Once I had seen NAG I was attached to it, I just had to buy it. I raced home and started reading it straight away. I just couldn't put it down. Once I read NAG I wrote this letter, I was overjoyed. Finally there is a S.A. Gaming mag, and quite a brilliant one at that. Before I go any further congratulations. I've wasted a lot of money on Overseas Gaming mags, they're a load of junk. But no more money will I waste because of NAG. Thanks a lot. I've got a few suggestions I'd like to share with you. First of all, in regards with a cover CD, instead of having a Playstation and PC CD, divide the monthly mags into two piles and the one pile can have a Playstation CD, and the other a PC CD. Those ways keep it affordable. Secondly you should have a few pages filled with up coming games, such as Croc2, Crash Bandicoot3, Tomb Raider3, Red Alert Retaliation, Tekken3, Soul Blade2, Spyro The Dragon etc. Last of all maybe you could start like a Gaming TV show in connection with your mag, you could talk about games, share a few cheats etc. If this does happen I'd love to be the presenter.
P.S. Could you please review Croc: Legend of the Gobbos.
Good luck

Dale Thomas
JHB

Hi Dale
Thanks for all the insight and suggestions, we take all our letters seriously and debate on such matters as CD covers.
As for the TV program, I don't think any of the current NAG team would pass the screen tests, so we have to send you our stead.
Ed

Dear NAG
I just want to say how thrilled I am to be writing to a South African Gaming Magazine. It is the first time ever that I write a letter to any mag.
Firstly, I would like to congratulate you on a excellent mag, keep up the good work. When I set my foot into C.N.A. I walked straight towards the computer magazines. I picked up a copy of the New Age Gaming Mag, I thought it was another overseas mag with a price tag that says "YOU CAN'T AFFORD THIS BRILLIANT MAGAZINE" cause it is from overseas.
As I looked on the mag I noticed a low digit number. After a while I saw it was South African. I immediately took the mag and bought it. It was the only computer mag that was in top-notch condition and South African with a low retail price.
Secondly, I want to reply on a letter that was in the July 98 issue, it was from Mario Oliver in Goodwood.
I would just like to say that he is out of his mind, we don't always want facts. When there are just facts the magazine gets boring after the second issue.
Furthermore I would like to say that the reviewers of this mag is excellent. Please keep on reviewing guys.
Thirdly I would like to talk about a cover CD. I know you might be sick of all the people nagging about a cover CD. I don't blame you, but if it is possible, a cover CD would look excellent with this excellent mag that South Africa owns.
Well that is all that I can think of now. So till next time keep up the great work. Oh ye I almost forgot, if it is possible can you put more Computer than Playstation Station reviews in the mag. I would really appreciate it, but if you decide against it, I wouldn't mind.

Thank for a great mag.
Frans van Niekerk
Pretoria

Hi Frans
Yes, the CD cover issue is a tricky one, but rest assured we are aware of the need for it. We are not sure when we will be breaking the news, but we will eventually surprise all our readers.
Thanks for the support.
Ed

Dear NAG
Thanks for a really great mag, it makes a refreshing change from all the US and UK crap that we are subjected to. To produce a magazine of such quality and at such an affordable price is definitely an achievement, keep up the good work!
I have just one question I would like you to answer. When we get a cover CD (not if we get a CD) what format will the CD take PC, Playstation or both and how much more would the mag cost?
Oh! I almost forgot. To Mario Oliver (July 98 issue) you suck mani, how can you say that NAG is not worth R11.95. NAG is worth way more than R11.95 for the quality you receive. What other gaming magazine can you get for the same price? NONE!
So why don't you stick your "Computer Gaming World" up your ass and then maybe you would realise what your missing by not reading NAG. I'm sure I will be speaking on behalf of the majority of the readers when I say that: May the fleas of a thousand camel's infest your ball's and your fingers turn to fish-hook's!

Kerry Cuff (Captain Bad)
Benoni

Hi Kerry
What more can I say. Do you enjoy fishing (hehe).
Ed

Dear Ed:
Heres a poem:
"Dear NAG thanks for a great mag, Shiny and glossy but not to pricey, Reviews which I like without one spike, I picked my first issue at my local store and as soon as I read it I wanted MORE MORE AND MORE, Your mag is great and not a bit outdate,Your cheats are not guppy but if you want more cheats head to happy puppy (www.happypuppy.com)

Muzaffar Looi
Kwa-Zulu Natal

Poetry in Motion
Ed

Preview Under Construction

Warren Steven continues his previews of titles at E3 to be released in 1998/1999.

Winging my way over to the good old U.S.A. to visit the Electronic Expo E3 can be considered as a dream come true for me. Atlanta, the city renowned for holding conferences of astronomical sizes hosted the 1998 E3, at the Georgia World Conference Centre. Not many cities have the infrastructure to contend with 41 300 game addicts and journalists from 80 countries, but Atlanta certainly withstood the masses.

Electronic Entertainment Expo E3 REPORT BACK

MGM Interactive

Wargames

Release: Q3 98
Genre: Action Strategy

20 Years ago, the WOPR, the deadly military supercomputer, nearly ignited the Cold War. Now its back with a new mission: Exterminate humanity!
Take control of NORAD's conventional forces as you plunge into the ultimate real 3D battle against the WOPR's futuristic troops.

Features: Limitless camera angles and a completely 3D playfield are available for the first time in a combat/strategy game. Execute your most creative strategies by using the realistic 3D terrain to hide troops and launch surprise attacks. Order your troops to hack for money, information, intelligence or sabotage the enemy's units and computer center. A huge arsenal is at your disposal. Choose from over 100 land, sea and air units like the double-gunned Mantis, heavy-payload Missile Launcher and massive Hovercraft.

Tiny Tank

Release: Q4 98
Genre: Action Strategy
Web Site: www.tiny-tank.com

Originally built as a marketing ploy to obtain public approval for military spending, Tiny Tank - a war machine with a bad-ass attitude and an arsenal to kick major butt - is mankind's only hope for survival and he is hell-bent on defeating the evil Mutank and his army of insane robots.

Features: Race, rocket and fly through futuristic, mind-bending landscapes on totally articulated treads with supercharged jet thrusters.
Battle an army of sentient steel robots in over a dozen giant levels packed with hidden secrets and power-ups.
Collect brains and guns of destroyed enemies to upgrade Tiny's combat firepower and solve never-seen-before puzzles.
Hop to the beat of an ultra-hip original musical score.

Tomorrow Never Dies

Release: Q2 99
Genre: 3rd Person Action

Now you will have the license to kill in the Playstation's first Bond game that lets you be the spy known the world over as Special Agent 007.

Features:
Based on the latest hit movie Tomorrow Never Dies.
Bond's resourcefulness knows no bounds: escape in cars, hijack a tank, swim beneath the ocean or parachute off mountainous cliffs.
3rd person perspective allows for Bond to execute new moves: tuck and roll, creep along walls or perform ski stunts.
All new Q gadgets including high-powered arsenals, zooming sniper scopes, retractible snow skis' infra-red micro glasses and a new Walther PPK.
In-depth missions delve into the intricacies of espionage.

Return Fire 2

Release: Q3 98
Genre: Action
Web Site: www.returnfire2.com

Based on the game of the same name which walked away with game of the year awards from Electronic Gaming Monthly, this second generation of pulse-pounding 3D land, sea and air combat is the ultimate gaming experience.

Features:
Blast your opponents from ground and airborne vehicles including Jump Jets, Tanks, Helicopters, Assault Vehicles, Aircraft Carriers, Jeeps and PT Boats.
Advanced enemy AI keeps you coming back for more.
New multiplayer support offers head-to-head dogfight mode and co-operative or death match action for up to 16 players on LAN or Internet.
Over 50 maps for intense combat experience, challenge and re-playability.

Microprose

Guardians Agents of Justice

Release: Q4 1998
Genre: Action

The year is 2099. It is a time of governmental collapse, rampant drug abuse and corporate repression. Super-powered mutants have been emerging.
You are the head of the Star Council, a secret society dedicated to bringing order back to the world. Three criminal organizations, the Web Lords, the Claw and the Shadowyn are bent on plunging mankind into total oblivion. you and your team of super heroes must prevent these organizations from succeeding.

Key Features
- A turn-based game with point and click interface
- Head to head play via local area network or modem. Two players create their teams of heroes and fight each other until one is eliminated.
- Players can choose characters from an extensive list of 24 pre-designed heroes or they can create their own using the custom character creation option.
- The characters move through randomly generated, multi-level, isometric combat maps exploring buildings, breaking through walls, and fighting powerful villians.
- Combat modifications that can be turned off or on for the most effective combination of attacks.
- Numerous action oriented attack and reaction sequences.
- Captivating 3D graphics. Super VGA.

Falcon 4.0

Release: Spring/Summer 1998
Genre: Combat Flight Simulation

Falcon 4.0 is a Windows 95, multiplayer air combat simulation set in the Korean peninsula with a real-time war in progress in which you take the role of a single pilot in an F-16 jet fighter. Falcon 4.0's superb 3-D photorealistic, texture-mapped graphics and detailed models of F-16 avionics, weapons and threats will provide the most realistic combat flight simulation available.
The ongoing simulation of a complex air/land/sea battle, called the Campaign Manager TAI, will create all of the tension, chaos and adventure that exists in modern air combat, immersing you within the game like no other flight simulation has done before.

Virgin Interactive Entertainment

Sword & Sorcery

Release: October 1998
Genre: RPG

A RPG that gives players the ability to choose turn-based or real-time combat. Created by David W. Bradley, one of the world's premiere designers of computer fantasy role-playing games and the genius behind Wizardry 5, 6 and 7, Swords & Sorcery is a 3-D role-playing game for Windows 95-based Pentium PCs. According to Bradley, the underlying principle behind Swords & Sorcery is simple: to bring "live" role-playing to the computer games, offering the player a closer sense of true role-playing than anyone has ever before experienced.
Swords & Sorcery can be played either as a single player game or multiplayer (internet, modem/LAN) game.

Dawn of War

Release: Q2 1998
Genre: Strategy

Developed by veteran games titan Gano Beeman, Stephen Beeman, and their team at Illusion Machines, Dawn of War transports players to a mythical world of prehistoric conflict where primitive races battle the mystical forces of nature, ferocious dinosaurs, hostile terrain, and each other. Players choose to be one of three tribes, Cro-Magnons, Neanderthals, or Saurians (a fantasy race of humanoid dinosaurs) in their struggle to conquer the world. To stay on top of the food chain, players will need to carefully manage the growth of their village, conquer their enemies and fulfill quests. In Dawn of War, tribesmen can be ordered to perform a variety of tasks such as gathering wood or stone, constructing buildings or special units, researching new technologies or casting magical spells.

Duel: The Mage Wars

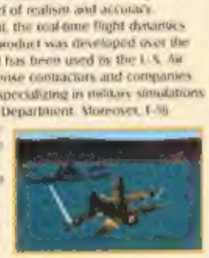
Release: Q4 1998
Genre: Strategy

Duel: The Mage Wars draws upon popular mythology and history to create a beguiling set of magical-shifting realms in which wizards schooled in the deadly arts of sorcery vie for dominance.
More than 24 mythical creatures including Black Dogs, Brownies, Centaurs, Elves, Griffins, Heroes, Phoenixes, Unicorns, Bats, Trolls, Wraiths, Skeletons and Zombies can be called forth to help the player wage war against the fearsome Wizard overlords who reign supreme over 30 regions writhing with natural and supernatural dangers.
Boasting up to 36 player Internet action.

F-16 Aggressor

Release: Q4 1998
Genre: Flight Sim

What is it that sets this flight model apart from what has been seen to date in the computer game market? According to developer General Simulations Incorporated (GSI), it is the attention to detail and the commitment not to be satisfied with anything less than the highest level of realism and accuracy.
Pursuant to GSI's goal, the real-time flight dynamics engine used in this product was developed over the past seven years and has been used by the U.S. Air Force and major defense contractors and companies throughout the U.S. specializing in military simulations for the U.S. Defense Department. Moreover, F-16 Aggressor is the only F-16 flight sim on the market to feature an explicit and complete model of the Fighting Falcon's fly-by-wire flight control system.



Superbike World Champs

Release: Q4 1998
Genre: Bike Racing

Now gamers can experience 32 rounds and 24 races of ultra-competitive motorcycle racing on 32 accurately modeled Superbike race courses. Boasting the real bikes, tracks, teams and racers of the actual world-class event, Superbike World Championship immerses gamers in a high-octane simulation of the ultimate bike race and lets them tear up the asphalt on dream machines like Ducati, Honda, Suzuki, Kawasaki and Yamaha. A combination of high-end graphics and intense multiplayer action allows the player to feel the pressure of gunning for first place against up to 31 other racers via Serial link, Network & Modem! In Practice, Qualifying, Warm Up and Race modes.

Professional Sports Car

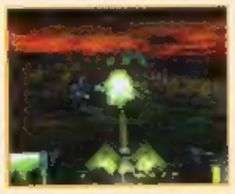
Release: Q4 1998
Genre: Racing Sim

For the player's driving pleasure, all of the dream cars racing in the 1998 season of the Professional SportsCar championship will be authentically re-created including the internationally famous Panoz Esperante. Virgin Interactive sponsors the Exxon Supreme GT racing series. This relationship provides VI with the opportunity to work closely with the actual Professional Sports Car Racing circuit teams and drivers to create the most realistic and exciting interactive sports car brand on the market. The game will also feature likenesses of famed racing teams and highly intelligent computer-controlled opponents which simulate the driving styles of real-life racers. Like each dream machine, all road courses on the circuit will feature unparalleled realism. The track-side areas will be completely detailed.

Recoil

Release: Q1 1998
Genre: Futuristic Action Shooter

A futuristic action shooter that challenges players to overcome the forces of a power-hungry computer network in a vehicle that morphs from a rapid-motion tank to a hovercraft, to amphibious war machine to a submersible--all in the player's choice of first or third person perspective.
Developed by Zipper Interactive, Recoil boasts a cutting-edge game engine that allows unrestricted 3-D movement in complex worlds at a fast frame rate both with and without the latest graphics cards. The engine and supporting technology provide the capability for awesome gameplay, highly realistic simulation, great multiplayer features and stunning effects, such as clothing and other environmental battle damage, altitude-based fog, depth based haze and horizon, spectacular lighting effects and realistic vehicle damage.



Thrill Kill

Release: September 1998
Genre: Beat-Em-Up

Featuring over-the-top violence and combat between all manner of psychotic deviants, Thrill Kill is definitely not for the faint-hearted or squeamish. Instead of the usual fighting game fare of kung-fu masters and monsters, this frightening bloodbath pits eleven hellbound freaks, mutants and crazies against each other and lets them battle it out for a chance to return from purgatory to earth. Once immersed in the competition, gamers will voyage to deathmatch arenas set in some of the most nightmarish places on this earth and in the underworld including the insane Asylum, the Morgue, the Meatlocker, Lost Burial Grounds and Hell itself. Several twists have been put on the traditional fighter, such as the ability to multi-tap with three friends for four-way fighting which is unique to the PlayStation format.

VIVA Soccer

Release: September 1998
Genre: Football Sim

Viva Soccer lets players bring back their favorite teams and players from the past four decades. The user can play forward through time in the World Cup Tournaments from 1958-1998, changing soccer as they will. Soccer fans can also form dream teams of their favorite players and challenge the world. Viva Soccer boasts an incredible selection of real players and real teams which includes over 900 teams, 16,000 players, close to 2,000 different uniforms, 250,000 different player attributes and easily recognizable representations of all world famous players. Scoring goals is also more exciting in Viva Soccer. Shots from top players will be modified into impressive efforts so realistic, that a shot on goal will have all the drama of a live game. Viva Soccer has a unique look and feel, drawing on the televisual and musical culture from the past through the present to create a rich, realistic and rewarding game environment quite different to any other in the genre yet appealing to both young and mature gamers alike.

Microsoft

Age of Empires 2
Release: Q2 99
Genre: Strategy

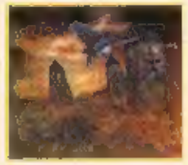
Age of Empires 2 spans a thousand years, from the Dark Ages to the late medieval period, in which players control the destiny of humankind from the fall of Rome through the Middle Ages. The game keeps the epic scope of the gameplay in Age of Empires while evolving the combat, economic, trading and diplomacy features. **Features:** Combat: Players can use reasoning, military formations and advantages in direction facing to add interesting tactical choices. Units are smarter with new AI options such as guard, patrol, and follow as well as multiple aggression levels. In addition players can turn enemy ships as well as board them and capture them. Alternatives to Combat: Players can improve the economy of their civilization through expanded trade and diplomacy options. In addition to gathering resources, they can trade at their own market or use trading routes with their allies. A market-based economy gives new options for players to buy and sell as well as speculate on resources. Diverse Cultures: Gamers command one of 11 mighty civilizations.

Motocross Madness
Release: Q3 98
Genre: Motocross Racing

Motocross Madness is a stunt racing game currently in development that captures the daredevil spirit of world class motorbike racing. MM allows gamers to control the bike separately, providing superior control, more fun and realistic gameplay. **Features:** Unique rider and bike physics model. Users control the throttle, brake, steering and gears on the bike, as well as the rider's center of gravity, which can be moved forwards, backwards or to either side. This results in superior control for sophisticated curves and more realistic gameplay for all users, as well as 16 midair stunts and jumps. MM features an extreme stunt competition that take place in five different rock quarries where uses must complete as many stunts as possible. MM is built from the ground up to take advantage of 3D hardware acceleration. Photographically sampled textures supply highly detailed 3D graphics for the riders, bikes, terrain and sky. MM features an easy-to-use track editor to help users build supercross tracks based on multiple templates supplied with the game. Up to eight players can race head-to-head via LAN's, modem or internet through Gaming Zone.

Urban Assault
Release: Summer 98
Genre: Action/Strategy

Urban Assault combines diverse action game play with strategic depth. From a first-person cockpit perspective, players can control 15 types of combat vehicles, from airplanes, helicopters and satellites to jeeps and tanks. Gamers can simultaneously command and deploy their entire arms from and overhead transparent map as they manage resources and upgrade technologies. To win the game players have to think like a general and perform like a front-line soldier. Urban Assault is set in a foreboding, post apocalyptic 3-D world with astounding high quality graphics. **Features:** Urban Assault lets gamers experience a variety of heart pounding action game play by enabling them to pilot up to 15 types of each vehicle - tanks, helicopters, jets, jeeps bombers, satellites - each with its own specific weaponry and functions. Gamers can fight against five distinct species and 15 types of enemy vehicles, from those of bionic aliens to World War I vehicles such as biplanes and zeppelins.



KONAMI

Metal Gear: Solid
Release: October 98
Genre: 3rd Person Action

The Metal Gear are highly mobile mechanized tanks, designed in the early 21st Century, as a government black ops project. Piloted by a single soldier, they can be inserted into military fortresses at a moment's notice. Their greatest strength is also the greatest threat in this game - payload of uranium - tipped long range nuclear missiles. They are stored in a remote army facility on Shadow Moses Island off the coast of Alaska. In the game our hero, Snake, is called in to fight his former comrades - the Foxhound Special Seals - who have seized a nuclear weapons storage facility. Possessing an intimate knowledge of their abilities and tactics, Snake is the perfect man to infiltrate the securely guarded complex and counter the terrorist threat.

Silent Hill
Release: Q4 98
Genre: Gothic Horror Adventure

Konami's first gothic horror game puts players in the heart of an eerie mystery searching for a missing daughter whilst unraveling the threads that lead to the disappearance of a whole town. Set in the sleepy little 'burg of Silent Hill - a place that defines the word 'hick'. Only now, something weird is happening, the residents have vanished and the very fabric of reality had been turned upside down. With stunning 3D poly gon graphics and a nerve-jangling soundtrack, this game will put players on the edge of their seats as they investigate the mystery of Silent Hill.

G-Shock
Release: Q4 98
Genre: Underwater 3rd Person Adven.

Players take the role of Jean Cave, salvage diver, bounty hunter and general all-round bum. Down on his luck and newly arrived on the Mediterranean island of Couvess, he's searching for the lost wreck of the Matilda, once the world's largest cruise liner, which disappeared in these waters 50 years ago. In need of vital supplies and equipment to start the search Cave must first survey some smaller wrecks and take what booty is available. Excellent graphics, an engaging story and perilous deep sea adventure make G-Shock a highly interesting title for the 98 releases.

Azure Dreams
Release: July 98
Genre: Role Playing Game

For years the Demon Tower has beckoned and , today on your fifteenth birthday, it's time to enter. So the story begins in Azure Dreams, the next role playing game to join the growing family at Konami. Players take the role of an apprentice monster tamer searching a magical tower for demon eggs to collect and grow. Once collected these eggs can be sold for profit or raised into friendly helpers that'll aid the player in his exploration of the higher reaches of the tower. With a flexible story system, that allows for the building of a prosperous town using earned funds, and a random map generator that makes each foray into the tower a new experience.

The Contra Adventure
Release: August 98
Genre: Action Strategy

Having sold nearly four million units since the game's introduction in 1987, the Contra series has become synonymous with blast-a-minute fun that puts the gamers strategy and shooting skills to the ultimate test. This all new 3D version brings consumers a fresh scenario set in a beautifully textured polygonal world. Nine powerful weapons, including the popular shatter gun and over ten intense stages combine to offer a thrill-packed, value-for money experience. This title will appeal to existing fans of the Contra franchise with gameplay elements that highlight the classic appeal of this series.

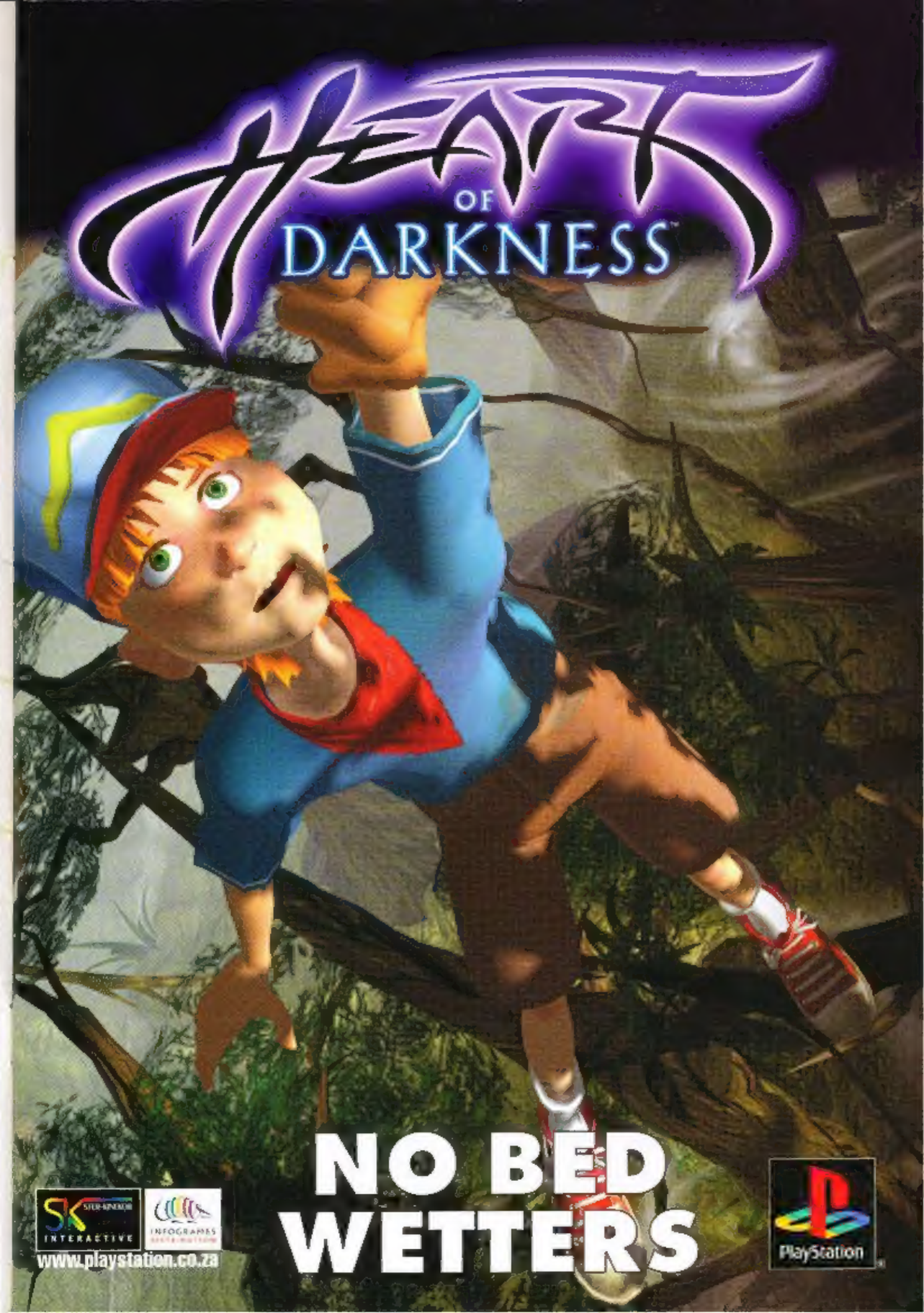
Poy Poy 2
Release: September 98
Genre: Puzzle Platform

Expanding on last year's party game, Poy Poy 2 delivers more stages, more items, more moves and more fun. The sequel includes multi-height levels and moon-based arenas with decreased gravity. Plus, there's new power gloves that enable special throwing skills and enhanced character agility with charges, diving rolls and crawling added. The object of the game is to pick up rocks, bombs and even your opponents and throw them around, gaining points for outlasting enemies and skills used in throwing objects. Poy Poy 2 is a fun and light-hearted game for players of all skills and ages.

Blue Byte

Game, Net & Match
Release: Q3 98
Genre: Tennis Sports Simulation

In G, N&M you'll go head-to-head against the best that the computer and your friends have to offer. When you think you're ready, you can enter the World arena via the Blue Byte tennis server. Online 24 hours a day and capable of handling thousands of players at once. Victories here move you higher up in the world rankings, closer to that coveted number one spot. **Features:** 3D graphics engine from the game Extreme Assault creates animated, realistic simulations of tennis players in action. A choice of 6 male and 6 female players with varying levels of quickness, strengths and composure as well as backhand, forehand, volley and service skills. Digital audio of cheering crowds, umpire calls, in-game commentaries and visible emotional reactions by the computer. A field of 100 male and 100 female computer opponents will compete with you for the top ranking during a season of 169 tournaments.



Cryo Interactive

SAGA: Rage of the Viking

Release: Unknown
Genre: Strategy

Discover the strategy game that places you right in the middle of the fearsome universe of the Vikings, their majestic legends and their mysterious beliefs.
Form your clans, manage your resources, forge your weapons, build your drakkar sailing ships and set out to conquer Enemy nations of clever elves, mighty giants and vicious trolls, among many others, await you, each race steeped in its own characteristics.
Real time strategy game with outstanding 2D and 3D graphics and rich in animations. Over 60 different clans to fight and to conquer in the course of your peoples saga. Highly developed level of artificial intelligence for unprecedented level of strategy sim.

Riverworld

Release: Unknown
Genre: Strategy

A strategy and resource management game entirely in real time 3D. Explore dozens of territories as you find, recruit, manage, fight and use a planet full of people of varying skills and aptitudes, including many great historical figures, to achieve your own goals. Over 300 interactive characters all represented in real time 3D, with realistic body movements thanks to 3D motion capture. Real time 3D allows you to zoom in and out freely and overhead view of territories to optimise exploration and battle strategies. 4 challenging game levels spread over 11 technological ages. Hundreds of objects and vehicles to found, invented and used, all animated. Stand alone or networked versions.

The 3rd Millennium

Release: Unknown
Genre: Strategy

Civil wars, military juntas, inner-city gangs, we already know what the world will look like in the year 2000. What about the year 2500? You are challenged to bring the world together in 500 years.
A visually rich isometric map - with 260000 plots of 2500 square kilometres - is populated on the basis of actual census projections and includes hundreds of political, demographic, sociological, geographical and economic surprises.
Best of all, the rules are entirely up to you: save the rainforest or plough it over, promote equality in the workforce or block it, in the world's first politically INcorrect simulation game.

Beam Software

KKND 2: Krossfire

Release: Q3 98
Genre: Real-Time Strat.

The survivors are back, freshened up after spending 40 years away from the radioactive surface. The Evolved are there as well, becoming more mutated after spending 40 years on the radioactive surface. And the series 9, agricultural gone real wrong, have shown up to punish humanity for ruining their livelihood. It's gonna be a great war, for those who can keep their heads on their shoulders.
Features: 51 single player missions in a non-linear structure. Full mission editor for single and multiplayer maps. Advanced CPU AI learns from terrain and continually uses scouts to assess the players strengths and weaknesses. Up to 8 player support with 20 multiplayer maps using TCP/IP and LAN. Stacks of air, land and amphibious units for each team. True fog of War with line of site allows for hiding and ambushing. KKND2 uses the famous, facial motion capture system to bring the rendered mission briefing to life. The 3D-terrain emulation allows player tactics such as high ground advantage, trap setting and hiding underground.

Dethkarz

Release: Q3 98
Genre: Combat Racing Simulation

Dethkarz will soon be burning rubber and launching plasma missiles across 3D accelerated PC's and Playstation's everywhere. Combining the adrenaline pumping action of fast paced stunt racing with futuristic weapons.
Dethkarz will hit players in the face with its blinding speed and wizardry.
Features: 4 racing environments with up to 30 cars over 12 tracks, plus Mirror, Arcade, Championship and Time-Trial modes. Cool car dynamics and track layouts, allowing for awesome jumps, stunts and car control. 4 customizable racing cars with individual handling, combat and racing characteristics. Excellent graphical detail and quality - 3D accelerator specific (3Dfx & Power VR). Different race classes and hidden vehicles for enhanced replay value. Striking set pieces and interactive action scenes within each racing environment. Multiplayer support via LAN and modem connections. Support for force feedback devices.

KKND 3

Release: Q3 98
Genre: Real-Time Strategy

The Survivors think they own the planet, on account of their technical superiority and the fact that no one has been peering in their gene pool. And the Series 9 robots, have decided that no human is going to own the planet. Looks like the end of the world again.
KKND (Playstation) is a new game set in the KKND universe. Designed specifically for the PSX, KKND is a real-time strategy game that takes advantage of the PSX control system.
Features: fast, controller-based order system. Three selectable sides: Survivor, Evolved and the Series 9 robots. Multiple air, land and amphibious units for each team. Plentiful resources which allow quick army build up for thrill-packed games. 50 single or multiplayer missions tuned to deliver fast-paced action. Two player split screen mode with built competitive and co-operative play. Humorous text supporting mission briefings.

Biotech Liberator

Release: Q3 98
Genre: Action Shooter

You're in control of a single combat vehicle, but one capable of morphing into widely different forms, providing you're carrying the relevant Transform Pod for your current situation. Each form has its own unique abilities and weapons. It's you against an entire planet of warmongering nasties, so you're going to need everything you got if you want to get out in one piece. Think of Soviet Strike meets Blast Corps, with a pinch of Lemmings to shoot, a mix of strategic problem solving, white-knuckle action and hefty explosions. **Features:** A wide range of unique and awesome weapons, deadly enemy and fiendish puzzles to solve. Fully deformed true 3D landscapes - if you don't like the way something looks, blow it up. Multiple 2 player modes. Choose from deathmatch, conquest and chase variations. Support for force feedback devices.

Squaresoft

Parasite Evil

Release: Q4 98
Genre: Adventure Action

Elements of science fiction, horror, exploration, action and adventure are combined with the film-quality storytelling and visuals in SquareSoft's Parasite Eve. The complex, compelling storyline, based on the best selling novel, forces the player into a struggle for the survival of the human race. The highly acclaimed pre-rendered graphic format used in Final Fantasy 7 blends Parasite Eve's beautiful cinematic scenes seamlessly with the realistically detailed gameplay environments. Real-time 3D polygon battles use a newly refined version of the Active Time Battle system, pitting players against mutated monsters, armed with an arsenal of customizable weapons and armor.

Xenogears

Release: Q4 98
Genre: Futuristic RPG

Preserving all the authentic elements of RPG's while adding an exquisite blend of hand-drawn and computer-generated animation story scenes, giant fighting robot action and unique battle sequences, Xenogears provides the elements that made Final Fantasy 7 popular and adds original features as well.
Over 20 minutes of dramatic cell animation with dialog sets the scene for this intricate, futuristic tale. Players can rotate the 3D gameplay maps a full 360 degrees and can jump to allow further exploration. Dynamic camera angles and lighting effects provide an experience that won't be forgotten.

Bushido Blade 2

Release: Q4 98
Genre: Sword fighting

Having breathed new life into the fighting genre with Bushido Blade, Squaresoft has brought realistic sword-play even closer to reality with its sequel, Bushido Blade 2. Players battle in vast, new, open 3D environments where a single blow can make the difference between life and death. Continuing a unique dueling style which eliminates life meters, time limits and restricted movements, BB2 also incorporates many new improvements. 12 new fighters enter the battle, bringing the total of playable characters to 20. New fighting modes, moves, weapons, and subweapons have been added. Each character encounters a unique story path, opponents, and ending, maximizing replay value.

Take 2 Interactive

Preview Under Construction

Montezuma's Return

Release: September 1998
Genre: 1st Person Action/Adventure

Anyone who was playing games in 1984 will recall this game as a classic, appearing on all formats as 'Montezuma's Revenge' and winning universal acclaim from the press and gaming community alike. Now, after a thirteen year sabbatical, the game that helped create an industry is back in all its glory, and sporting a new first person guise for 1998. 'In Montezuma's Return we take real-time 3D to the next level by creating the most immerse interactive experience to date.' Designed with no quiz in mind, the game is a first person perspective inspiration. Games don't have to be full of blood and weapons to hit the right spot and, as proved by Montezuma's historical role in the 1980's, the time could just be right to introduce a whole new gaming community to Mrs Montezuma 1998 style.

Terra Victus

Release: September 1998
Genre: Strategy

Combining the combat playfield of real-time strategy games with the character depth of turn-based strategy games, Terra Victus introduces the player to an environment in which they not only build an elite team of soldiers with specialized abilities, but then equips them and lead them into real-time battle.
Facing complex and difficult scenarios against a much larger foe, players move their covert team from territory to territory, with the single aim of destroying the opposing side.
Strategy is not only important on the battlefield but at a larger level as well, as territories may be won and then lost, with hotly contested land changing hands back and forth until one side emerges victorious.

Spearhead

Release: October 1998
Genre: Tank Simulation

Get behind the controls of a M1A2 Abrams tank in this awesome combat simulation. The game is visually stunning with support for 3Dfx acceleration already built in. Battles can be fought during different times of the day including dawn, dusk and night, with each affecting strategy. The tanks are modeled on texture maps from real army tanks, with supporting vehicles also modeled after their real life counterparts. Real world physics are reflected in the game forcing the player to control their tank the way real tanks must be controlled. A monstrous machine that can move over 60 miles per hour and stop on a dime is not easy to control. Moving carelessly over the wrong terrain will result in a tank that is stuck or turned over on its top. With nearly every detail of tank life accurately represented, military simulation fans have a lot to look forward to.

Space Bunnies Must Die

Release: Q1 98
Genre: 3D Action Shooter

Giant bunnies invade earth, round up humans to use as slaves and food, capture and dissect animals in order to sew them back together in bizarre combinations, and kidnap an up-and-coming country western singer for their leader's prize pet. The primary focus of gameplay is blasting alien bunnies from outer space and utilizing their army of Mutant earth animals to help overcome daunting obstacles. SBMD casts the player in the role of Alison, a sexy trash-talking, rodeo-riding Rambo bent on revenge. She embarks on a hair-raising adventure into a subterranean death camp where animals turn the tables on humans. The player runs, climbs, jumps and blasts her way through a series of challenging maze-like levels jam-packed with pitfalls and populated by a menagerie of bizarre creatures.

Thrust Twist 'n Turn

Release: Q4 98
Genre: Futuristic 3D Racing

With a fast hi-performance 3D engine, smooth graphics, cool 3D tracks, loops, jumps, 180s and crazy halfpipes are all part of the racing experience. You can drive a single race on a single track, or compete in an entire racing season in Championship mode. TTT features arcade styling with pits and shield damage meters. Negotiate bumper turns, make gut-wrenching drops and initiate jumps while blasting your opponents with weaponry.
Features: 8 3D multi-layered, spaghetti like tracks. 6 individual vehicle designs. A possibility to tune the vehicle between races. Visible damages on vehicles. Advanced computer-controlled drivers and a carefully tuned challenge level for both beginners and experts. Multiple racing modes and a battle mode. Split screen options for two player.

Monkey Hero

Release: Q4 1998
Genre: Adventure

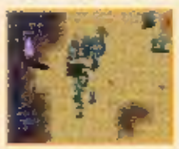
As the main character, Monkey, you venture through a vast landscape of over 2,500 screens of gameplay packed with challenging puzzles and powerful enemies. Monkey must restore harmony between the Three Worlds by finding the missing Eight Chapters of the Magic Story Book. Explore over 16 action-packed Dungeons and other fantastic sites, encountering 45 different enemies and 14 unique Bosses, including a final battle with the magical and muscular Nightmare Boss. Features a real time 3D terrain with true perspective and a fully interactive, beautifully textured environment where you have full interaction with the gameplay environment. Artwork is a unique mix of Japanese anime and Disney style animations.

Red Orb Interactive

Warlords 3: DarkLords Rising (Add On)

Release: August 98
Genre: Strategy

DarkLords Rising features four new campaigns and twelve individual scenarios including all of the original Reign of Heroes scenarios, as well as five new hero types, 30 new units, two new spells and ten new abilities.
Seven multiplayer games have also been added, including capture the flag and north versus south games. The robust AI has been greatly enhanced, and now features computer personalities and game specific computer AI in multiplayer games. A fully-functional map, item and campaign editor rounds out the package making this an essential purchase for any discerning Warlords fan.



Baja 1000 Racing

Release: November 98
Genre: Off Road Racing

The action is displayed via a state of the art 3D engine delivering stunning, high polygon count graphics at a high, sustainable framerate. In Baja 1000 Racing, you attempt not to just win the race, but to survive it. Competitors conquer a wide variety of terrain and weather conditions, including mud, dirt, sand, and snow, as they traverse a course modeled on the 1998 race covering the entire length of the Baja California, Mexico peninsula. Players choose from a selection of Class 1 open wheel buggies or super high performance trophy trucks, and race up to fifteen computer controlled racers or fifteen human opponents via the Internet.

Prince of Persia 3D

Release: Q1 99
Genre: 3rd Person Action/Adventure

Prince of Persia 3D includes all the features which made Prince of Persia so popular, including fluid, realistic animation, devious traps, and an elegantly simple interface for running, jumping, climbing, and sword fighting. The new version of Prince of Persia uses advanced 3D technology to combine the fast-action combat of a fighting game with the depth and immersion of a classic adventure/action game. The story line, co-authored by Mechner, is in the rich tradition of the Arabian Nights and pulls the player through the exotic and fantastic locales of ancient Persia. Environments will include ornate palaces, labyrinthine caverns, mystical ruins, and bizarre fortresses, all of which will be stylized in the rich aesthetic characteristic of Middle Eastern culture.

Extreme Warfare

Release: August 98
Genre: 3D Action

It seems that a new dimension is entering the gaming market with co-operative play becoming a much-needed facet for the multi-player gaming. That is how Red Orb and Extreme Warfare are taking up the battle with unique missions not only based on blasting everything in your path but using the trampiay and strategic entities for completing 24 multiplayer missions. From what can be seen from the screen-shots this seems very promising for the gamers who are looking for the different side to multiplayer. As a single player game EW promises to be different and entertaining with 13 single player missions per race.

GAME OVER

As with many other games, developers and distributors create an aura of excitement around their products months before their time of release. Commando's: Behind Enemy Lines being no different, is one of the highly anticipated games of 1998 and transports you back in time to the World War 2 era of valour and honour.

Based on the hit movies such as Dirty Dozen, The Guns of Navarone and Devil's Brigade, you take control of a reckless and seemingly organised group of trained mercenaries, hell bent on changing the course history. Armed with weapons of destruction, your objective is nothing less than all out success of all objectives and with that in mind, these guys give new meaning to the term 'license to kill'.

War veterans and shell-shocked game lovers will no doubt revel in Commando's strong historical story set in the ding-dong battles of the Allies against Germans. It must be said that Pyro's intention to make Commando's a more playable title than a perfectly historically correct simulation of the World War 2 was the right decision and only the die-hard wartime strategy gamer will pick up the small indifference.

As levels and standards increase in the gaming fraternity, Commando's sets new peaks to be scaled. Impressive opening intros to each mission and superbly detailed levels have been structured to give the feel of the era. The six available characters are uniquely designed in all ways and particular attention has been given to the buildings, vehicles and general graphics. The new engine from Pyro stands up to the drain that Commando's gameplay puts on it and has a range of eye candy features that set the picture of historical clarity. Even without 3Dfx or 3D acceleration, there are graphical delights that stand out such as massive explosions that are simply a wonder to watch and the ability to zoom in and out sets Commando's apart from similar games of this genre. A simple press of a button will zoom out until you have the entire map on the screen and vice versa will zoom in that you could almost smell the breath of your enemy, though a bit pixilised. You are also able to change the resolution up to 1024 x 768, if your graphic card and processor allows, giving you a much larger viewing area of the game.

Commando's: Behind Enemy Lines idea of using the isometric real-time strategy genre shows dividends when you actually get into the depths of this title. It has twenty single player missions, each with varying objectives and goals. Each mission is packed with soldiers, patrols, artillery posts, vehicles and barracks. A large amount of planning and strategising encompasses Commando's gameplay and gives new meaning to the term 'patience is a virtue'. Stealth and cunning are the sole techniques to be used and a small dose of destruction.

You start each mission with a varying team that is decided upon by the computer, a little annoying seeing that it also decides what weapons and supplies each merc gets. With that you set off on tasks that would scare off even the ruthless Russian Mafia. This is where the intense strategy comes in, each character has a certain training and can only use certain weaponry and perform different functions. For example the Green Beret carries a knife for slitting throats, a decoy for attracting attention, a ice pick for climbing and a shovel for hiding in sand or snow for surprise attacks. He is also big and strong and can therefore pick-up and move bodies and drums, and with that he can even hide the bodies under drums. The balance of the characters are made up of a driver (can use vehicles, submachine gun and first aid kit), marine (stealth knife, inflatable boat, harpoon and scuba gear), sapper (trap, grenades, wire cutters, pliers, time and remote control bombs), sniper (sniper rifle and first aid kit), spy (poison syringe, impersonate enemy, distract enemy, first aid kit and hide bodies). This gives you an idea of the usefulness that each merc has and believe me Commando's makes full use of each and everyone during the missions.

It seems that Pyro have put a great deal of effort into the computer controlled AI and this all revolves around the characters field of view. Commando's looks from the start of each mission to be to easy, because you are able to see the entire map (no fog of war effect) and you can see exactly where the enemies field of view is. But these advantages are soon understood and are critical to completing even the first mission. You will end up having to time moves and crawling around because the computer characters always seems to cover each other, if you kill an enemy soldier move the body to an unseen area, therefore precision and timing are crucial for success. If you are discovered, which happens fairly often, it would normally put an end to most of your plans and either a totally restructured plan will have to be devised or you would have to revert to a save game.

As with so many titles at the moment, Commando's has some very annoying bugs. Somehow they passed through the quality control of the developers, either that or they would rather use the purchasers to find the faults. A mention must be made about the save game bug that periodically creeps in, once you save a game and reload it, certain characters have moved and are making their way to a suicidal death. This can set you back a few hours because without the survival of all your mercs, you cannot continue on to the next mission. Another bug comes from the multiplayer sector that shows symptoms of a memory leak by increased latency and out of sync problems the longer you play. By the way, the multiplayer option allows up to six players co-operatively (no deathmatch) and will have you and a few friends bashing each other after no time. There is a patch available, though difficult to find, which fixes the multiple CD's problem for multiplayer.

Commando's control mechanism is another disappointing feature frustrating the player time and again. You are able to control individuals and groups of mercs but this is a tedious task of using the control button. No drag and select feature is offered and in tense situations there is no doubt you will lose one of your characters. A lot of practice and use of the hot keys will overcome the short-sited control but for the most part you will be reverting back to saved games. In the sound department there is nothing that stands out as overly special, dodgy accents and subtle background music are average.

Looking past Commando's flaws is a little difficult at times and they show up frequently. Nevertheless Commando's is a totally addictive game that will keep you occupied for many hours on end with its strong AI and intriguing missions. If the bugs and control problems had been sorted out, I have no doubt that Commando's would have received higher accolades.

Real-Time Strategy

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 100 Mhz 16 MB RAM 4 X CDrom 130 Mg Hard Drive Space DirectX Sound Comp. Win 95 (DirectX 5)	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 8 X CDrom 130 Mg Hard Drive Space DirectX Sound Comp. Win 95 (DirectX 5)

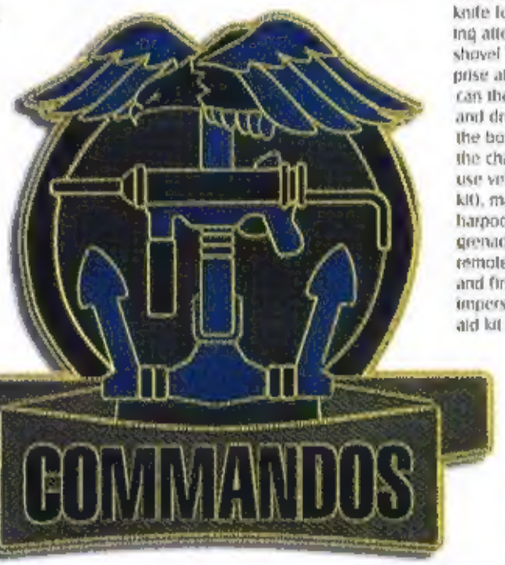
Developer: Pyro Studios

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

Supplier: EA Africa
Tel: (011) 803-1212
RRP: R 349.00

International Web & Demo Site
www.eidosinteractive.com
SA Download
www.gamesdomain.is.co.za
Size: 13.4 Mg

PC CD-ROM



BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Storm dons his SADF uniform and leopard crawls through the mud with some of the meanest mercenaries you can find.

Commando's:
Behind Enemy Lines (cont)

Highly detailed landscapes and buildings create awesome levels of play.

In those days MNET Satellite needed some serious equipment

SUMMARY	GRAPHICS	SOUND	CONTROL	STORY	CONTINUITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL RATING
Unique World War II strategy game with excellent non accelerated graphics. The computer offers intelligent AI that makes for challenging gameplay and long hours of enjoyment. Unfortunately due to some irritating bugs Commandos does not reach the heights it should have.	92	82	75	87	90	89	86

WEBSITE: www.eidosinteractive.com

MULTIPLAYER	COMPARATIVES	PRO'S and CON'S
TCP/IP (2-6)	Syndicate Wars X-Com	+ Challenging Gameplay + Superb Graphics + Intelligent AI Multiplayer Bugs - Average Control -

Quake 2 Mission Pack: The Reckoning

Quake 2 Add-On

Pentium 90 Mhz	Pentium 166 MMX
16 MB RAM	24 MB RAM
4 X CDrom	8 X Quad
100 Mg Hard Drive Space	100 Mg Hard Drive Space
100% SB Comp. Sound	100% SB Comp. Sound
Win 95 - NT4 (SP3)	Win 95 - NT4 (SP3)
Full Version Quake 2	Full Version Quake 2

id Software

Activision

Multimedia Warehouse
Tel. (011) 315-1000
R 240.00

www.idsoftware.com

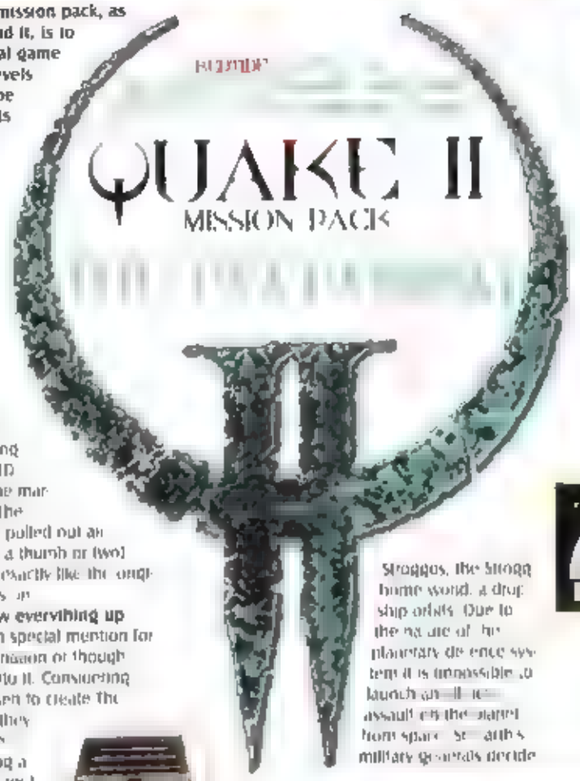
PC CD-ROM

The purpose of a mission pack, as far as I understand it, is to add to the original game New monsters, levels and weapons should be standard issue. But this isn't where it should end. Besides all the obvious additions, a little something extra is required to make it special. It's been done in the past with the brilliant mission packs for the original Quake so you have to wonder where The Reckoning went wrong!

With the release of Unreal and the upcoming deluge of first person 3D shooters about, it hit the market the developers of The Reckoning should have pulled out all the stops (and perhaps a thumb or two). It's not terrible, but it's exactly like the original Quake II with knobs on.

Kill everyone and blow everything up

The plot deserves a special mention for the sheer lack of imagination or though that must have gone into it. Considering the amount of time taken to create The Reckoning you'd think they would have spent more than ten minutes writing a decent script. But who am I to judge, you can decide for yourself. The Reckoning follows a slightly different agent from the original assault on Stroggos in Quake II. The time period is the same, but this game follows the course of a different drop pod. Cue heavy metal soundtrack. In the cold vacuum of space above Stroggos, the Strogg home world, a drop ship orbits. Due to the nature of the planetary defence system it is impossible to launch an all out assault on the planet from space. Earth's military generals decide to send in thousands of one-man pods. This is where you come in and so does the story for The Reckoning. The drop pod you occupy ends up in a little trouble after it's bombarded by an unexpected electromagnetic pulse wave: all electronic circuits die and your hi-tech pod rockets out of control towards the surface. Besides having an affinity for tattoos, swearing and knowing how to fire a gun, the marine you play in this story obviously took an advanced course in aviation mechanics and physics. Using this knowledge you manage to avert your death by manually firing the rockets and crash landing in a swamp. Far off course. Everything goes dark. Eventually you regain consciousness and hear something splashing in the vicinity to side you, battered deep pool. Reflecting on the deaths of all the marines has didn't make it today kills you every though with revenge the Strogg are going to pay. I swear that soon, real soon there'll be a reckoning.



Mag Slugs
The Particle Cannon uses magnesium slugs for ammunition. You'll find them scattered around most of the later levels.

The entire plot for Quake II was relatively original for an action game and as you can see The Reckoning contributes very little to the formula. It's not that we expect an intricate plot or multiple endings from an action game, but at least try and come up with something original. At this stage you can correctly assume that, much like the story, the Reckoning doesn't offer anything all that new and exciting but more of the same.

The game starts right when you crash landed, a quick look around confirms that you have indeed crash landed far away and are very much alone. Right from the start nothing looks new besides the promise of exploring large outside areas. The illusion of being outside is created by clever use of textures and rocky architecture but this sense of freedom soon comes to an abrupt end when you realise that it still plays like you're deep in a military complex, except for the outdoor graphical style. The first creature you encounter in the swampy environment is a Gekk and a couple of his friends. This is your first official new monster. The Gekk is a fast amphibious creature that hunts in packs and has nasty energy sapping acid blood, so don't stand too close with that shotgun. The Gekk spits acidic saliva from a distance and when moving close, their claws work well too. An average opponent that doesn't really inspire terror once you've figured out how to kill them quickly. Once you've run around outside in the swamp for a while you'll enter the sewers and eventually find your way into the caverns containing the Reckoning. The Reckoning looked promising initially but once you get inside again it looks identical to the original game. There are a few interesting locations and concepts throughout all the 18 new levels, but don't expect to see anything really innovative. The main focus is on the new weapons and monsters which is a problem if you consider that after a few rounds have been fired and the first few new monsters killed you'll be looking for some real entertaining and innovative levels to work through. The game is definitely harder than the original Quake II but this is due to the liberal spraying of ammunition and health throughout each level and the more deadly nature of the new enemy modifications.

The Trap
Once dropped, the Trap acts like a miniature black hole, sucking enemies into its vortex and converting them into power cubes, which can be consumed for extra health. Great fun in a deathmatch.

Gene pool

There are two totally unique enemies in The Reckoning and seven modified enemies. The first is the Gekk, which you'll find right in the beginning of the game. The Repair Bot is the other new enemy. These guys aren't aggressive and won't attack unless provoked. They do need to be provoked though as they have the ability to resurrect dead Stroggs, and there is nothing more painful than cleaning a tough level only to return later to find your handy work all undone. Another way of getting around the returning bad guy problem is to make sure everything rests in pieces, literally. There is no coming back to life if you've spattered them over ten square meters and halfway up a wall.

The modified enemies all have new abilities and weapons and caution is required when dealing with some of them. Your basic grunt guard has three new variations. The Ripper Guard carries one of the game's new weapons, an Ion Ripper gun which is easy to dodge first time but watch your back as the ricocheting projectiles keep bouncing off walls. The Laser Guard has a high-powered laser beam mounted on his arm and the Hyper Blaster Guard carries a modified Hyper Blaster that spits out rounds of blue energy. Besides the guards there are a few Beta Class enemies you've met before but now they pack a bigger punch. The Iron Maiden has a heat-seeking rocket launcher, kill her quick is good advice. The game's other new weapon is used by the Gladiator. The Phalanx Particle Cannon is even more deadly than the rail gun originally used by these monsters. Finally the Super Tank has also had a makeover. Tough as hell and carrying almost every weapon the Strogg have, running away might be your only option if you're under equipped.

The Phalanx Particle Cannon
Firing two quantum-accelerated magnesium slugs, this gun issues death warrants with tremendous ease, but like the rocket launcher, don't fire it in a confined space.

The Ion Ripper
This weapon uses energy cells for ammunition and has double mini-boomerangs of pure energy. The projectiles bounce off walls and can be used in quick blasts around corners.

Quad Fire
Much like the Quad Damage this little weapon increases your firing rate by a factor of four. Combine this with the Quad Damage and you can imagine the mess results. Ammo for some Strogg was cheese!

Again, most of the new enemies are modifications to familiar Quake II enemies. Although they are much harder to defeat now and this makes for a challenge, you're not likely to forget soon.

Deathmatch

There are 6 new deathmatch levels that come with The Reckoning and one old modified level. The new weapons are fun to use initially but a firm favourite is the Particle Cannon. For the more devious types the Trap can be used with great success on most levels. The only real flaw with the play balancing is that with good use of the map you can eventually get your health up around the 500 mark, making you impossible to kill. The developers should have put a cap on the maximum health to balance things out better. The deathmatch levels are average and like the main game levels, don't offer anything really unique - I'd recommend at least eight players on a level if any fun is to be had.

Mission packs are essentially all about being innovative and inventive with the existing software engine. The Reckoning obviously uses the same engine as Quake II so we all know how smooth it moves and how good it looks. The bottom line here is this - if you played Quake II right through to the end and loved it then The Reckoning will give you more of the same, only harder. There isn't anything to really get excited about and it's a pity the developers didn't do something more with what they had. It's a wasted opportunity and we can only hope that the next mission pack does the job better.

The BFG can certainly light up a situation.

Reviews Under Fire

NETSTORM
ISLANDS AT WAR

Real-Time Strategy

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 90 Mhz 16 Mb RAM 2 X CDrom 1 Mg SVGA Video Card 15 Mg Hard Drive Space SB Compatible Sound Win 95	Pentium 166 MMX 32 Mb RAM 4 X CDrom 2 Mg SVGA Video Card 15 Mg Hard Drive Space SB Compatible Sound Win 95

Developer: Titanic Ent

Publisher: Activision

Supplier: PCM / Datatec
Tel: (011) 315-1000
RRP: R 299.00

International Web Site
www.activision.com
Local Download
www.gamesdomain.co.za
Size 9.3 Mg

For those gamers that enjoy real-time strategy with a difference! Ravjor tells all...

PC CD-ROM

NetStorm is the new real-time strategy game from Activision. NetStorm looks remarkably similar to Warcraft and its other real-time strategy clones however the appearance is where the similarity ends.

You play the part of a high priest of an island in the land of Nimbus that has been granted great powers by the deities to rule over your followers and bring greatness to your island. The world of Nimbus is in fact made up of separate islands which float in space positions the up. Each of the islands has a high priest at its helm, and once the priest has constructed a temple, the island then belongs to them and no other Nimbian can erect any structures or weapons on that island.

While in games such as Warcraft real, you have to harvest minerals, oil or wood in order to proceed with construction, NetStorm boasts no such familiar resources. The Nimbus world is governed by Storm Power which is harvested from Storm Geysers. Storm Geysers come in three forms, that of ice, thunder and wind. As a high priest you will align yourself to one of these great powers. The weapons and transport structures you wish build will depend on which Storm power you align for. There is a fourth Storm Power, that of the sun. This is a universal energy and any high priest can produce sun-aligned objects. Unlike other real-time strategy games alignments are more dynamic and can be changed during the game whenever you happen to capture an enemy piece.

The object of the game is to become the high priest of all the islands. To do this you have to capture the priests on the other islands, thereby acquiring their knowledge base and controlling their temples and thus their island.

In order to capture the other priests you have to build bridges from your island to theirs. This sounds like quite a simple affair, however in fact your bridge building techniques are crucial to your overall success. Not only do your bridges have to be well designed but they also have to be well defended as well, because of course, bridges are bi-directional and therefore you are putting yourself at risk because now you have opened a pathway for capture from the other island.

These bridges are not only necessary as access routes but also for effective placement of your weapons. Aah, before I proceed any further let me quickly relate another major NetStorm deviation from other real-time strategy games. All the weapons and combat units you have at your disposal are stationary. Once you have placed a Sun Blast Thrower or Cannon in position it cannot be moved. So where is the real-time strategy component of the game you ask. Well NetStorm is all about strategic positioning of your effort and most only operate in certain directions. All the weapons work automatically and once you have placed them on the map you do not need to interact with them again. You will need to constantly keep an eye on them though because there is no weapon available that is infallible.

NetStorm is designed as a multi-player oriented multiplayer game and allows for both LAN connections and Internet game play via Interplay servers. The multi-player element allows for eight players in total and it is recommended that you find players that have a similar skill level to your high priest, otherwise your participation could be quite short-lived. If you do not have an Internet connection or friends to play with, then playing in the single player mode is not with stimulating (in fact the AI is actually frustrating intelligent).

On the whole graphics are very good although simple, obviously suited to multi-player gaming. Controls are very simple and completely adequate requiring only left and right mouse buttons although there are plenty of hot keys in those intense multiplayer sessions. Multi-player games become quite frantic and you might find yourself becoming quite lost by the sheer pace of the game. Sound and music are good yet unobtrusive allowing [illegible] game play. So if you are a gamer that enjoy real-time strategy with [illegible] NetStorm is a good choice. Avid Total Annihilation C&C gamers might find the game a little slow moving.

Floating islands, where the heck are the beaches?

A GAME SO BIG, IT'S
Unreal
Un...imaginable
A NEW AMAZING 3D ENGINE
Un...precedented
RUTHLESS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – THE BOTS WILL HUNT YOU DOWN!
Un...believable
HYPER REALISTIC ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS
Un...compromising
AN ENDLESS MULTI-PLAYER UNIVERSE OF USER-CREATED, HOT-LINKED LEVELS
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A REVOLUTIONARY EASY-TO-USE LEVEL EDITOR
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Action Adventure

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 90 Mhz 16 MB RAM 4 X CDrom 80 Mg Hard Drive Space DirectX Sound Comp. Win 95 DirectX 5. Mouse	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 8 X CDrom 450 Mg Hard Drive Space DirectX Sound Comp. Win 95 DirectX 5 Mouse

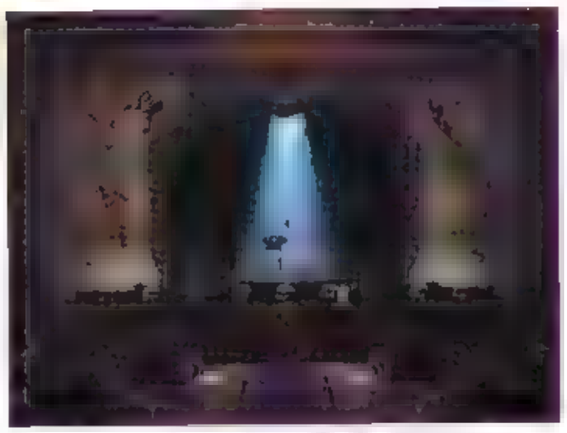
PC CD-ROM

Developer: Interplay

Publisher: Interplay

Supplier: EA Africa
Tel: (011) 803-1212
RRP: R 329.00

International Web Site
www.oflightanddarkness.com



This performer certainly knows how to keep the party going

"If you are an avid adventure player and are looking for something more challenging than another Leisure Suit Larry then Of Light and Darkness is for you!" - Raz(r

Of Light and Darkness
the prophecy

Of Light and Darkness is a surreal fantasy adventure game set in a mysterious village somewhere between heaven and hell. It seems we've entered the millennium-old dream pat

real. the game is dark and moody and sometimes quite unsettling as it explores various apocalyptic events that are said to herald the end of the world. Of Light and Darkness tells the tale of how every thousand years a gate opens

between the walking world and the realm of dream time where humanity has the chance of creating a new future for the next thousand years.

According to prophets, the world is set to end on the 5th of March in the year 2000 and it is up to you, as "the Chosen One" to save the world. In order to do this you will need to rescue the prophetess "Angel" and stop Sir Hob, the Dark Lord of the seventh millennium from casting us in to a thousand years of darkness and terror. As you might guess Of Light and Darkness is not your average adventure game but one that has been motivated by the typical doomsday prophecies relating to the end of the world.

In the game you will come across apparitions representing the seven deadly sins. These spirits are the souls of evil sinners that have lived in the past and who now hide in the village. By discovering the location of the seven deadly sins and redeeming the apparitions you will be able to triumph over the Dark Lord. This might sound like the way to go and for some might [illegible] morally confrontational. But one should remember that it is only a game of the struggle of good versus evil. Although I would classify it as an adult game.

I'm sure the patrons at this Massage Palour find their techniques a little painful

The game interface is similar to Riven but with a look and feel far more alien and fantastical. The village was created by an artist called Gil Bruvel in a style which can only be described as manic. Colours are wild and the village has a deserted carnival atmosphere. Moving around the city is achieved by clicking in the direction of choice and the game then animates the trip from one point to another where it becomes a still frame. In the static scenes you do have full 360 degree panoramic views and in some scenes you can also look up or down. While I don't usually like this rather old-fashioned style of game mine actually rather suites this type of game. In some scenes you will find coloured orbs which you will need to challenge the powers of darkness. There are also portals and artefacts that you will be able to collect. Portals can be used to have from one room to another quickly while each of the apparitions is related to a specific artefact which is needed before you can redeem them.

When you begin a new game you are transported into the village. By moving your mouse over the scene the cursor changes shape whenever you are able to perform a task or travel to a new location. Many buildings contain apocalyptic prophecies from sources as obscure as Nostradamus and the Book of Revelations while others hide

Of Light and Darkness (cont)

This wall of girlfriends part. Was that Shakespeare?

the seven deadly sins Sloth, Anger, Greed, Envy, Gluttony, Lust, and Pride. Other rooms contain clues for solving puzzles on how to redeem the various souls. Time is limited however as the spirits are trying to hasten the end of the world by taking their related artefact to the rooms of destruction. In one of the buildings you will find the mask room where you will find several coloured stars which when clicked on display a group of three masks. Each coloured star represents three different apparitions and this gives you one clue to their redemption. For the colour of the star tells you the colour orb needed to redeem that apparition. In order to do this you must discover what crime was committed during their lifetime and then go to the room for that sin with the relevant artefact which you must recover from the room of destruction. And then select both the artefact and the correctly coloured orb and use them to redeem the apparition. This might sound all a little complex which it is, but the fun comes in with trying to discover the sin committed and the related artefact by listening to the various obscure clues that you will come across. All the while you are exploring the village the Clock of Judgement, located in the centre of the village, is counting down to the coming of the end of the world so you can't afford to waste time. To help you get into the game there is a 'Free Tour' which will guide you through part of the first level giving you hints where necessary and let you explore without the time limit. Reading the manual is vital to ensure you understand the game

Visually impressive sets are well designed and extremely colourful

to help you decipher some of the clues.

If you are an avid adventure player and are looking for something more challenging than another Leisure Suit Larry adventure then I can guarantee that this game will keep you engrossed for hours. Of Light and Darkness is a game for the mature player. It has a strong story line and surprisingly fast paced for an adventure game. Although there is no content that is overtly shocking, parents should take note of the over fifteen age group recommendation on the box.

In the launch issue of New Age Gaming we gave Final Fantasy VII for the PlayStation our first ever Award of Excellence. Now FF7 is available for the PC with 3D-acceleration SquareSoft aimed at porting the game to the PC while keeping it faithful to the original product. So just how does this best selling PlayStation game come across on today's PCs?

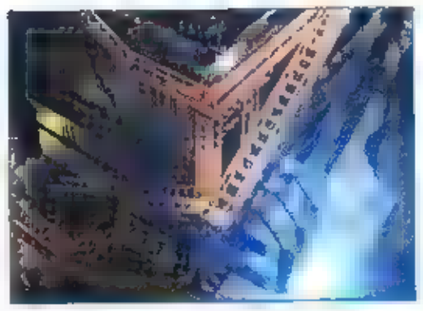
PC CD-ROM

An evil and powerful Corporation is slowly draining life from the planet in an effort to control the universe. However a small rebellion known as Avalanche has vowed to put an end to this despicable plan. You take on the role of Cloud Strife an ExSoldier of the evil Shinra Corporation. Consequently Avalanche initially as selfish mercenaries, quickly becomes much more involved in this mysterious tale of friendship, love and the battle between good and evil.

FF7 has one of the most original stories to date and has depth that is rarely seen in any game. The initial story gets more complex while revealing each characters personality and background as the game goes on. Although kids will find the game enjoyable it does have some mature language and is more aimed at the teenage and adult market.

Very little has changed in the PC version the only adjustments to game content was the correction of a few translation problems that occurred when FF was initially translated from Japanese to English.

The main objective is to stop the evil corporation named Shinra and a spell wielding soldier Sephiroth from destroying the very life force of the planet. Along the way you be able to explore a whole world full of interesting characters and exotic locations while you make friends and experience events that change your characters lives.



you can be certain that you missed something the first time around when finishing FF7. All of the sub-quests are required to finish off the Ultimate weapon, the most powerful object you will have to finish a great deal of them.

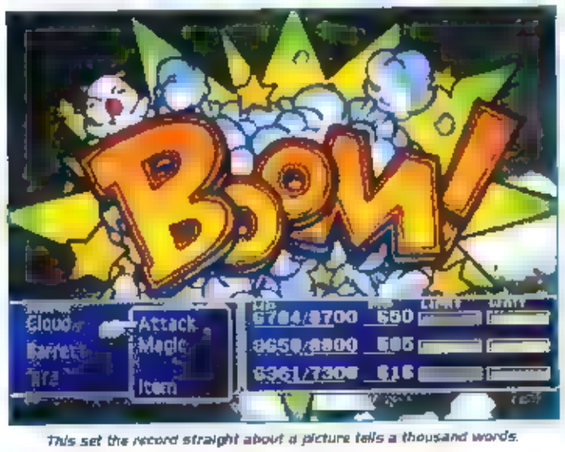
One of FF7's biggest attractions is its character portrayal and development. It's the top of its class in this field, there's no other game that even comes close. Throughout FF7 the characters will have flashbacks of past tragedies and emotional experiences giving you a sense of actually being involved in the storyline and even ultimately you really start to care what happens to these characters.

FF7 uses a simplified top based system that produces a unique combat system that can be described as a game within a game. It has a feeling of movie as cameras pan around and zoom in and out of the action. Throughout the game your characters will engage numerous varieties of monsters and it's at

FINAL FANTASY VII™

Communication between characters and NPCs is achieved using text boxes, which most gamers will remember from the early days of gaming when there were no sound cards. Admittedly this technique is out of date but it works exceptionally well in FF7. After the first hour of playing you become so involved and immersed into the story line that you actually don't notice the fact that you are reading. This is largely due to the fact that the dialogue reads like a fantasy novel.

the immense world where the game takes places give characters numerous quests and sub-quests and initially this gives you characters a chance to evolve their skills and become stronger as time progresses and believe me you will



This set the record straight about a picture tells a thousand words.

Role Playing Game

Min Required	Recommended
P 166 MMX (without 3D) P 133 Mhz (with 3D) 32 MB RAM 4X Quad 200 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 (Direct X 5.2 2 Mg PCI SVGA	PII 233 32 MB RAM 8 X CDrom 400 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 drive X5.2 3Dfx Accelerator

Developer: Squaresoft

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

Supplier: EA Africa
Tel: (011) 803-4212

RRP: R 349.00

International Web & Demo Site
www.eidosinteractive.com
Local Download
www.gamesdomains.co.za
Size: 50.7 Mg (ye, right Ed.)

Final Fantasy VII (cont)

REVIEWS UNDER FIRE

eventually need each and every level your characters can gain.

Weapons and a substance known as Materia are used for taking these creatures on. Weapons are standard but Materia gives combat a whole new element. They are used for casting spells and summoning gods in the form of super monsters, some of them even effect the outcome of certain other Materia uses. Taking this into consideration there is literally hundreds of different combinations to keep gamers occupied while they experiment searching for the ultimate combination.

FF7 has an amazing music score that helps to immerse you into the game's world unlike most games it adds to the mood and atmosphere of the game instead of being an irritation. A serene melody accompanies you throughout the game world and a heavy battle tune comes on when you find yourself in combat. The quality of the music will depend on what type of sound card you have though. On any sound card with wavetable synthesis the music sounds spectacular but on cards using FM synthesis it sounds artificial.

Fortunately there is a version of Lucasarts's Soft for gamers with FM boards it will add a bit of overhead to your processor but the increased quality is well worth it.

Graphically the FF7 PC version disappointed me all of the scrolling background scenery and cut scenes look pixelated due to the fact that Squaresoft stretched the 320x200 PlayStation originals to fit on the PC at 640x480. They could have at least re-rendered the cut scenes to give players the awe you feel when seeing them on a PlayStation. They also chose the Windows format for the cut scenes and with MS compression the cut scenes look dithered. Squaresoft did include some bad news for gamers without a 3D accelerator and I quote from the video support page on Eidos "To play in 640x480 (full screen) in the software rendering mode, it is highly recommended that you have a Pentium 300 or better." Not many gamers have or can even afford a system with a 300 Mhz chip and will have to settle for a 320x200 resolution which most new games have left behind a couple of years ago. At this resolution all of FF7's graphical awe gets flushed down the tube and you might as well buy a PlayStation.

Another area where FF7 falls short is in its controls. Every action and all menu items are controlled from the keypad and there is no way of reconfiguring it. I will kind of sits playing with one hand as my other hand was always hovering over the keypad looking for a key to press and praying for hours. In end this was can become uncomfortable as well. Inexplicably they have included support for gamepads and with it the game plays a lot easier. The controls in the game are also similar to that of the PlayStation and can support up to 8 buttons. Unfortunately you can't configure them either not unless you have programming ability.

The PC version of FF7 puts me in a dilemma on one hand it's the best game out there and on the other there are so many problems with the PC version. Squaresoft should have done more research on PC games and customised FF7's interface more to make use of the extras that the PC provides. At the end of the day I hope either Squaresoft can do about these problems now and would still recommend Final Fantasy VII to any RPG enthusiast who has a 3D acceleration card or who is fortunate enough to have a 300Mhz system.

Cloud throwing a bit of light on the subject of publishing stress

ARMY MEN

Strategy

Pentium 90 Mhz	Pentium 133 Mhz
16 MB RAM	32 MB RAM
2 X CDrom	4 X CDrom
15 Mg Hard Drive Space	135 Mg Hard Drive Space
Win 95 DirectX5	Win 95 DirectX5
1 Mg SVGA	2 Mg PC SVGA

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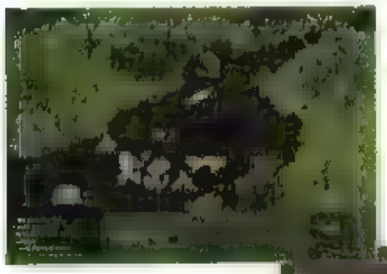
PC CD-ROM

I fondly remember my collection of green army men as a young child. Proud they stood through all the abuse that only a seven-year-old boy can dish out. Many battles where fought and there where even a few unfortunate melting incidents we should all pay our respects to the dead army men lying buried deep in gardens across the country.

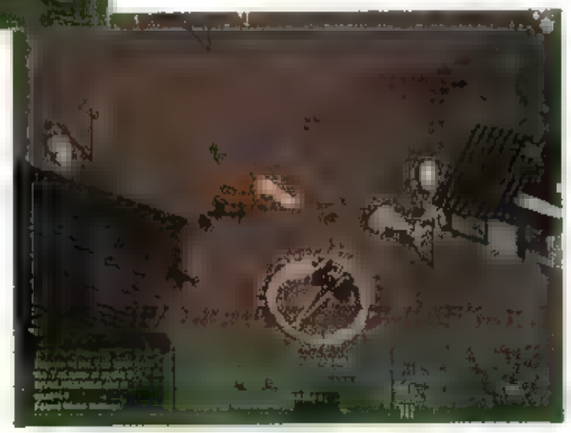
Anyone who ever played with plastic army men will be looking at this box with a level of nostalgia longing to return to their boy-hood roots. Army Men seems to have this inexplicable hypnotic quality to it. Imagine getting a fair chance to blow up or melt a few plastic soldiers.

The game is dozens of interesting stories about little green men who fly around in space-ships and impregnate farm girls but at night but that's another story for a different security court. Overall is the plastic soldiers and tanks. Anyone who has seen the animated movie Toy Story will have witnessed the debut of his soldiers in all their digital glory carrying out impressive military manoeuvres. Army Men is the same digital outing for those plastic soldiers and this time not everybody's coming home.



Greens, Tans, Blues or Grays!

The story is a touch vague right from the start but as each mission is successfully completed another small piece of the tale fits together. As you fight and destroy the enemy on some of the missions, your commanding officer will order you to retrieve documents, information or components of a secret something. I'm not going to reveal what this is as it will spoil the superb ending. The overall objective is to conquer the Tans' base. They find the something that you're also looking for. The enemies are called Tans because they are the Tan coloured variation of your standard plastic soldier you play as. There is also two other armies involved. The Blues and the Grays. The Tans use the cowardly blues as fighters, saboteurs and spies, who by nature would rather lay a careful ambush than attack you right in the open. The Grays use guerilla tactics to win their battles. Fundamentally the only difference between the armies is one of colour, otherwise they all have the same weapons and units.



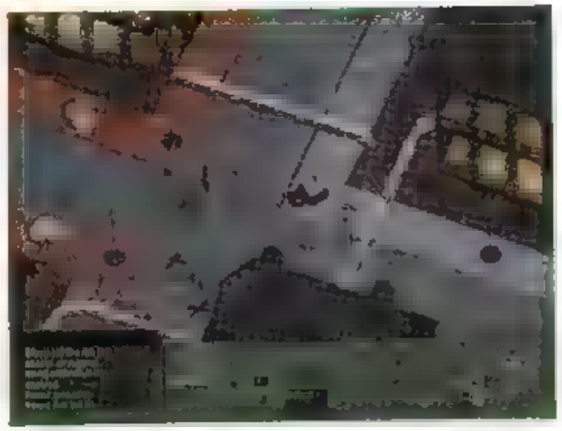
There is this distinct smell of burning plastic in the air

At first look at this game from screenshots and adverts might lead you to think it's another Red Alert or Total Annihilation clone with a novel twist on the theme - toy soldiers. It might look like your regular strategy game but it's not. In any stretch of the imagination. Army Men plays a lot like that old arcade game Commando where you run around a map from bottom to top killing everything. Only Army Men has more options. You have direct control over one single soldier called Sarge for the duration of the game. Using the unique control system you move Sarge around each of the maps on specific missions. It makes a nice change not having to build a base, amass forces and go after the enemy. The control system takes a bit getting used to. It once mastered it soon becomes second nature. The idea is to move the cursor in a specific circle around your soldier and it points in the direction that you wish to go. Once your soldier is facing the right way press your secondary mouse button and off he'll go. The same system is used in a jeep, but you can only control the direction you are facing. It's a little restrictive from the start but as you play you'll find that it's more than adequate. The keyboard is also used quite heavily while playing and this does distract from the action on screen from time to time as you select different weapons, summon air strikes or control squads of men. Besides controlling Sarge you'll also get back to squads every now and then. Controlling these extra units is easy as they only have three commands - Follow, follow, defend and attack. You also have the opportunity to drive different vehicles such as a tank, jeep and a cargo truck when the mission in question demands it. The method for driving around the map uses the same control system and with a little practice you'll be squashing enemy soldiers with your tank in no time.

Weapons

Army Men is slightly different to most games in that your one soldier can only carry a maximum of three items at one time. What this means is that if you are carrying a mortar you cannot carry the grenades, unless the mortar is dropped first. Your primary weapon is a rifle which is never dropped and can be upgraded to an automatic rifle which you keep for the specific mission it was found in. The secondary weapons are placed in the maps in a number of different areas. Range from grenades to bazookas and you can even pick up a flame thrower, which is great for melting soldiers. Once a soldier is on fire he actually melts into a pool of hot bubbling plastic - the thing college kids can do at night are kept inside, explosives and more weapons, and the same rule applies here - you can only carry one at a time. Instant health packs are also scattered around the maps and these will top up your health as you move over them. Lost kit packs can also be collected but their contents vary. Weapons slot will be used by these. It's always a trade off and because of this some elements of strategic war gaming pokes through the quick action here. Besides collectable weapons there is the air strike, air reconnaissance and Paratroops drop. This is where you can call in extra units to help you out.

Army Men (cont)



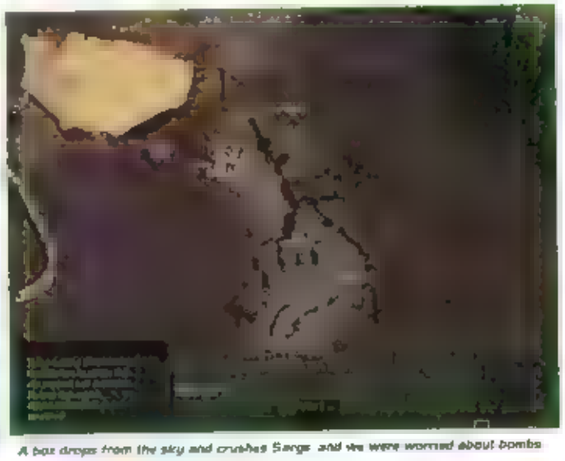
Enforcing the curfew is a dirty job but somebody has to do it

The smell of burning plastic

The graphics cannot be noted for anything remarkable other than the fact that they faithfully recreate the look and feel of plastic army soldiers - everything feels right about their movements and animation. Even the vehicles have a dreamy smooth artificial look to them and should you witness the destruction of the enemy it's two bits connected by a bit of plastic will fly off into the air and bounce around just like the toy versions they're modelled after. As for music and sound Army Men have anything exciting to listen to. Its pseudo World War II music is repetitive and dull. The sound effects are adequate but don't enhance the action. The entire Army Men package just makes the grade in these two areas but never excels as anything. Most other games in this genre have outperformed it long ago.

Limited nostalgic appeal

Army Men is fun for a while but essentially has no meat on the bone. It's dated in concept and style and I can't help feeling that Army Men is a wasted opportunity. Imagine how great it might have been if you could have played the game as actual plastic soldiers in real life situations. Like attack on the breakfast table or siege in little Johnny's bedroom. There aren't enough different options to last and you will soon get bored with the limited units and supplies. Even in a multiplayer environment you won't be playing all that long. I'd view this as more of a strategic game than anything else - it is real time strategy but you need to use your brains more than brawn. There's a nice mouse with a fair keyboard set out to help you with the myriad of key strokes. After playing games similar to this with plenty of different units, Army Men seems a four trope by. It's been beaten back on counterparts proud.



A box drops from the sky and crushes Sarge - and we were worried about bombs

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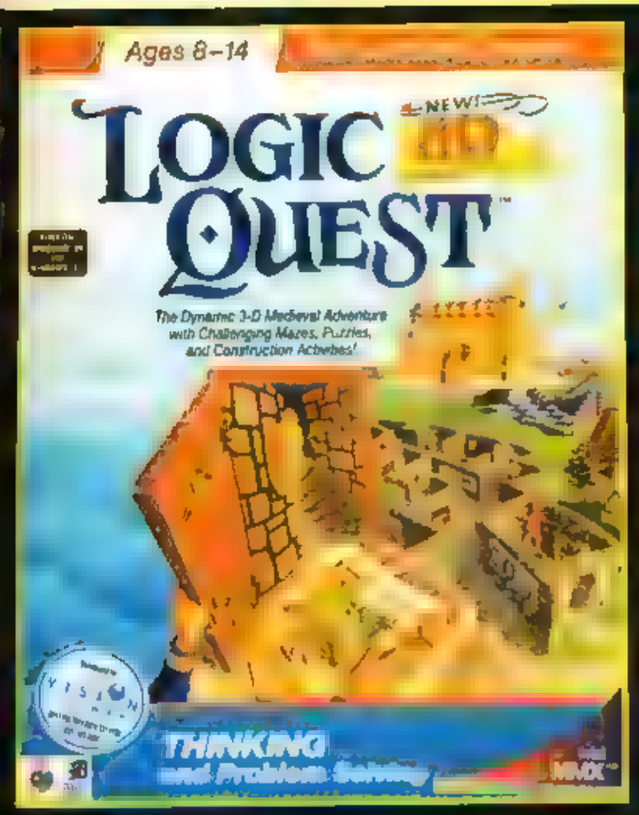
- ✔ Measuring & Estimating
- ✔ Identifying Emotions
- ✔ Similarities & Differences
- ✔ Animal Traits
- ✔ Creativity & Music

For Ages 5 - 7 Years Old



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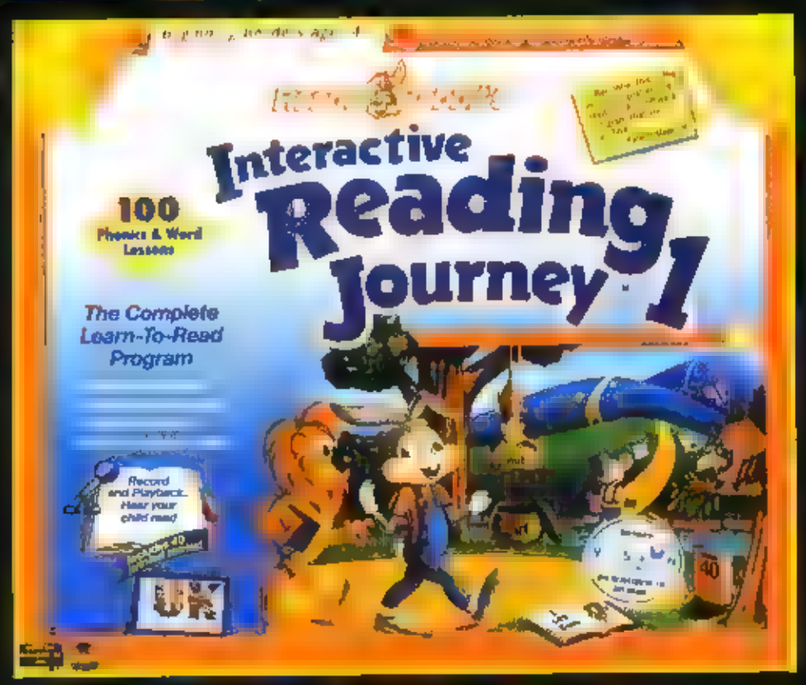
For Ages 8 - 14 Years Old



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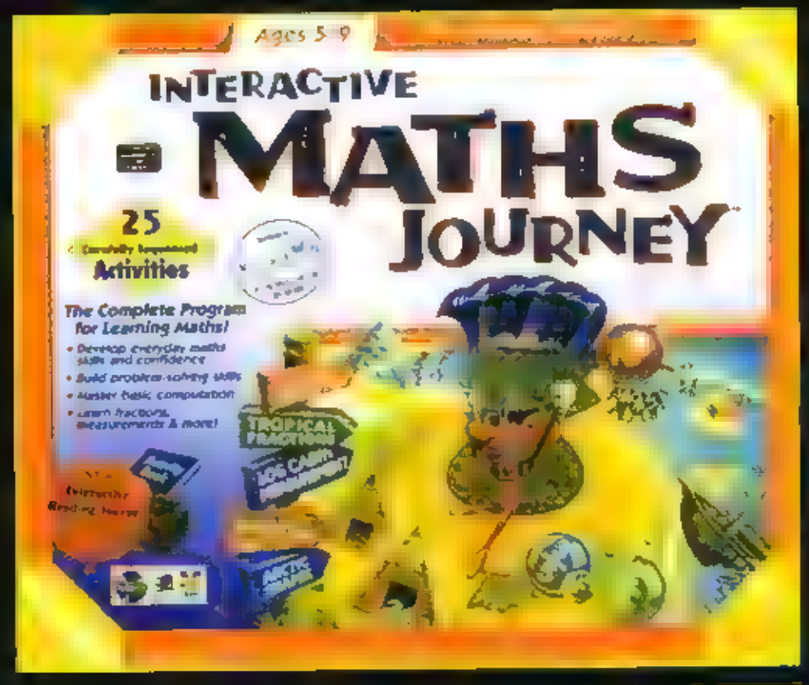
Tom Nehrenz, father of Matt

For Ages 5 - 9 Years Old



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or write to Electronic Arts Africa, PO Box 3189, Rivonia, 2128, South Africa. http://www.ea.co.za

MAX 2

MECHANISED ASSAULT & EXPLORATION

- Combat Strategy -

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 133 Mhz 16 MB RAM 2 X CDrom 57 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 (DirectX5) 1 Mg SVGA	Pentium 200 MMX 32 MB RAM 4 X CDrom 57 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 (DirectX5) 2 Mg PCI SVGA

Developer: Interplay

Publisher: Interplay

Supplier: EA Africa
Tel: (011) 803-1212
RRP: R 329.00

www.interplay.com
Local Download
www.gamesdomain.is.co.za
26.5 Mg

I have been avoiding becoming obsessed with any of the newer strategy games like Total Annihilation or StarCraft which I feel are rehashed versions of earlier games. However, MAX 2 by Interplay recently caught my eye and as I had played and enjoyed the first version which has been released a year or so ago, MAX 2 is a futuristic strategy game set on various alien planets where you play one of nine races each with their own distinct abilities and advantages.

In MAX 2, humans have become involved with the Concord, which is an intergalactic alliance between a number powerful alien races. Now as part of this new friendship, humanity is now struggling to deal with a new alien threat from a race called the Sheevat. At your disposal you have a variety of tanks, infantry, ships and aircraft. In multiplayer games you can choose to play as the Sheevat in where you will have access to some unique units. MAX 2 differs from most strategy games in that you can choose to play any of three types of games, turn based, simultaneous turn based or in real time.

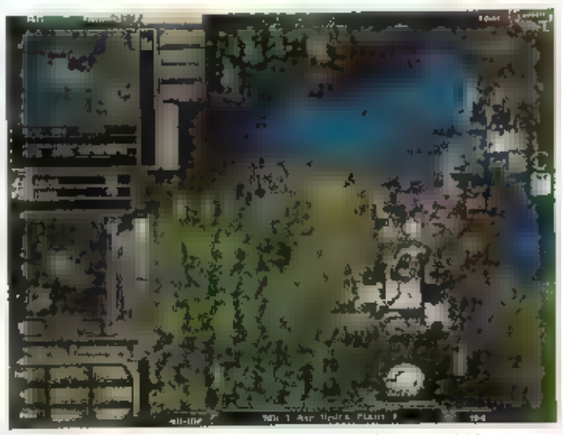
Real Time Strategy games seem to be far more popular than the turn based variety, probably because of the impracticality of playing turn based strategy games over the net. The first version of MAX introduced a new concept in strategy, how ever, one of simultaneous turn based strategy where all players made their moves at the same time and then waited to see the outcome. This style of game play is well suited to multi player games and apart from a few orchards, most players found the technique to work very well.

Simultaneous turn based games create the impression of real time play without all the usual frantic keyboard bashing when things get a bit hectic. There is an optional time limit during which all players have to make their moves, which can be set to anything from 60 seconds to 6 minutes. The turn based games tend to be a lot more strategic than the real time games where it is all you need are sufficient numbers to overwhelm an enemy player. In MAX 2 there are certain scenarios that lend themselves towards real time play however. These are usually games where there is little or no resource management required and it is just a case of attacking as quickly as possible.

PC CD-ROM

MAX 2 has a number of game features that set aside as a strategy game. Foremost is the game interface which while not as clean as the previous version, does offer some new features such as variable zoom levels as well as perspective correction. The battlefield is now fully 3D and units can take advantage of hills and gullies to ambush or hide from enemy troops. Unfortunately the 3D scenery is not as eye-catching as impressive as in Dark Omen (see full review) but I found it worked well enough. In addition to the battlefield there is also a small world map and a mini map function called the Spy Eye which allows you to tag various units or areas and keep them visible in a small window to the left of the battlefield. I found this quite useful to keep an eye on potential risk areas or scouts that were watching for first signs of enemy movement.

A new race of monkeys are making the world go round.



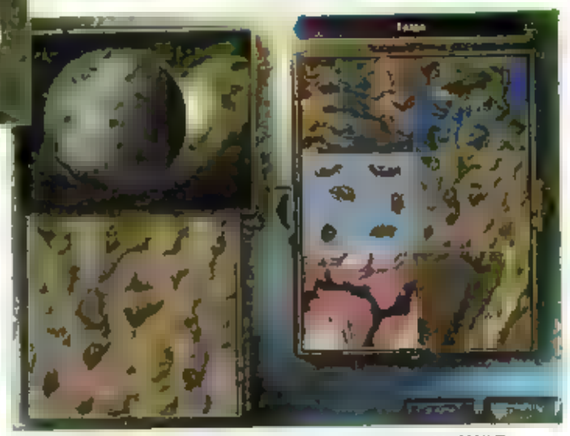
The local water skiing resort on the vaal river has new neighbours

The game can be set to show various bits of information such as unit health, scan range, firing range to name a few. I found the scan range very useful and the unit health. Most of these features you refer to turn on and off via the game interface or hot-keys when needed so you don't need to get bogged down by overly busy looking screens. Unfortunately some of the more detailed game play features from the original MAX have been removed such as the need to mine for fuel and the need to build power connectors between buildings. The Surveyor has also been made redundant as the resources show up clearly, making it much easier to get going although I did find this a bit simplistic.

There are many combat units, each of which has a wide variety of capabilities in terms of attack power, speed and scan range. In many cases some units such as the Assault Gun can shoot further than it can see but by making use of a Scout which has a greater scan range you can then target enemy units or buildings that would have out of sight. Choosing the correct combination of units is therefore important to be effective. Units can be improved upon however, by researching upgrades for your units you can design crafts such as a scout with added scan range and speed, or a tank which can shoot further and have extra armour. Some units are partly organic and learn during combat becoming more powerful and can also repair themselves. In many games of MAX 2 you might also begin play as a member of a Concord 'clan' that gets bonuses for some of its units right from the start an example are the Cloaks whose members excel at espionage.

Game play is good and fast although the path finding can be a little off at times. Although I didn't find any major faults, a number of gamers have complained of a variety of bugs such as enemies that stay hidden even when in clear line of sight. There is a patch (ver 1.2) out but I don't recommend installing it as I found I couldn't open any of my previous save games. I enjoyed MAX 2 but had hoped for bit more. With games like BattleZone, Myth and Dark Omen seriously challenging and redefining the concept of strategy games it takes more than a rework of an old concept to become a hit. In summary MAX 2 falls into the same category of all the other strategy sequels but is still fun to play.

Choose between real-time or turn-based action, whatever takes you fancy.



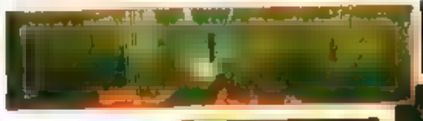
A large selection of scenarios and maps are covered in MAX 2

HEXPLORE

It was a tough era for adventurers in the year 1000. Defending innocent pheasants and sheep from vicious monsters and rescuing maidens from ogres and demons were all in a day's work. It is common knowledge among educated dragons that noble men and adventurers taste better than pheasants and livestock, so you better watch the skies and hope you blend in with the foliage.

On a holy quest to join the crusades in the distant lands of the Middle East a young hero called Mar Bride leaves to join the fight with a troop of noble knights. On their epic quest they are attacked in the dead of night by a band of monsters deep in the Carpathian Mountains. Mar Bride is knocked unconscious during the battle and wakes the following morning to the gruesome remains of the battle. The surviving knights have been taken to the castle of the evil Garkham, who is also known to the region for inflicting pain and suffering on the neighbouring states. So your quest to rescue the knights and rid the land of the evil Garkham begins. There also seems to be a sub-plot buried in there somewhere about a secret manuscript called the book of Hexplore. It is told that this book reveals the location of the Garden of Eden, a source of incredible knowledge and power, which Garkham also has his eye on.

Hexplore is a role playing game where you get to control four characters of different classes as they explore the land on their quest to defeat all things hairy and evil. You begin with Mar Bride, an Adventurer character class, who needs to recruit other characters during the game until a party of four is established. Adventurers are intelligent and possess the ability to operate complicated mechanisms. Archers are agile and can find their way into inaccessible locations. Warriors are brave and their tremendous strength allows them to open blocked doors and move heavy stones. The last type of characters are the Magicians who, being well versed in magic, can decipher most written text, making them useful for gaining access past magical barriers. Each respective character class plays a vital role in completing the game as each one possess different abilities that the entire team needs to utilise to complete the game. To complete the game you'll need the strength of the Warrior to move aside a stone pillar, so the Magician can open the magic portal to a small gap in the wall that only an Archer can pass through, while the Adventurer operates the pulley system to move the deadly spikes out of the way. Quite a mindful, but this is how most of the puzzles in Hexplore are solved.



As you move through each of the Games 200 maps are locations the black shroud that hides the rest of the map is lifted allowing you to see more. Each of the maps is relatively large and many secret areas and treasures can be found. The trick is to rotate the map so you can see hidden areas behind cliff walls and stone structures. This 360-degree rotation is fairly unique to a game of this nature and makes each of the maps seem even larger and more complicated. Many of these hidden areas conceal treasure chests that contain useful items. As you progress through the game hundreds of monsters will attempt to

Role Playing Game

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 100 MHz 16 MB RAM 4 X CDrom SVGA Video Card 5Mg Hard Drive Space SB16 Compatible Sound Win 95 (DirectX 5)	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 4 X CDrom SVGA Video Card 5Mg Hard Drive Space SB16 Compatible Sound Win 95 (DirectX 5)

Developer: Ocean

Publisher: Infogrames

Supplier: PCM Datatec
Tel: (011) 233-1074

RRP: R 299.00

International Site
www.hexplore.com
Local Demo Download
www.gamesdomain.co.za (8.4Mg)

Depth of research has rubbed off and added a new dimension to the space genre. Maverick like Astronaut recommends...

again. Redtide in perpetual motion.

experience bonus icon appears for you to collect. Accumulate enough of these and your character progresses another level of experience up. Besides experience points, slain creatures also leave useful items behinds like weapons and special potions. This is how most of Hexplore plays. Explore, kill, collect, solve and kill again.

There are a number of multiplayer options available in Hexplore and it can even have a decent game over the Internet. I was able to connect to the Quazaar Games Server and play a short game with another person. There was a fair amount of lag but Hexplore isn't a action game and can get away with momentary pauses in the action. The on-line server is an interesting mix of foreign and English languages but you should be able to figure out what needs to be clicked on when and where.

Hexplore is a fine example of a role-playing game and makes up in intrigue and rhythm what it lacks in graphics and sound. Although not the best RPG title out there it certainly has a special something that will keep you coming back for more. If you're a big RPG fan then Hexplore provides ample challenge.

XENOCRACY

THE ULTIMATE SOLAR WAR

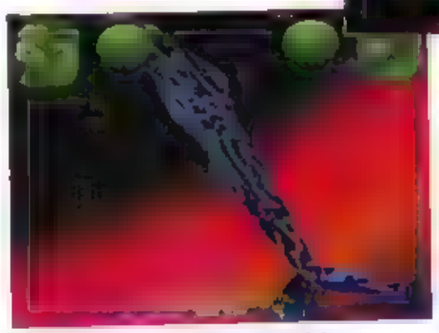
Depth of research has rubbed off and added a new dimension to the space genre. Maverick like Astronaut recommends...

Welcome to the year 10,000 where mankind has colonised space thanks to the discovery of a mineral known as Lycovite. But all is not well between the four giants of superpowers that control this corner of the galaxy. Earth, Mars, Venus and Mercury have large alliances who secretly wage a cold war against each other to increase their stake in the precious mineral. Keeping everyone at bay is an organisation known as the UPN for United Planetary Nations. Unlike our local boys in blue uniforms, this solar equivalent of the UN has teeth. And that's where you come in.

You are the wingleader for Rel squadron of the UPN with orders to defend the outer colonies against aggression that could precipitate a war and generally keep the peace.

What does all this mean? Lots of flying through space in beautifully rendered 3D shooting up pirates, firing missiles at warring interplanetary cargo ships and navigating asteroid fields and planetary surfaces. If you play in Arcade mode all the aggression in the wing corner of the solar system and you could be missing the opportunity to prevent a war starting somewhere else.

It's an interesting combination of space combat simulator and political strategy game. The space combat part is fun to play but the political strategy can get quite difficult. In the Simulation mode you can select a Situation Report which will show what's going on in any of the main regions of Saturn, Neptune, Jupiter, Uranus, Pluto, the inner planets or Deep Space. You can select which mission you want to fly from here, view a video briefing and then accept. You fly with a wingman so it's up to you to choose a weapons systems Officer or WSO. Each has strengths and weaknesses that you must weigh up before choosing one of them as a partner. The Special Operations Executive to whom you report also has an R&D section where you can allocate resources to developing better weapons during the time span of the game. You'll need them too as you come across increasingly more sophisticated enemies.



I've never seen a fish in space before.

The flying is complicated but a basic subset of the several odd controls will get you by well to begin with. It does warrant some comparison with Wing Commander in the flight department and the company politics goes out the window and you can just zoom around blowing ships up not unlike Wing Commander. Select Simulation mode and then you have to choose your missions carefully. Favour one side too much and you could start a war. Shoot up the wrong convoy and you could start a war. Limit

Flight Sim Strategy

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 133 MHz 16 MB RAM [illegible] 10 Mg Hard Drive Space SB Compatible Sound Win 95 (DirectX)	Pentium 200 MMX 32 MB RAM [illegible] 200Mg Hard Drive Space 3D Accelerator (3Dfx) Win 95

Developer: Grolier Interactive

Publisher: Grolier Interactive

Supplier: PCM / Datatec
Tel: (011) 233-1074

RRP: R 299.00

International Web Site
xenocracy.grolier.com

son is favourable. Your ships are much more organically based than the typical sharp-edged X-wing clone. Using a mouse or a joystick is recommended though as the controls can be quite mushy initially. Missiles, guns and a variety of beam weapons are available for arming before you start so choose wisely. And screaming in with guns blazing will just waste ammo. Infra red radar and missile locks are good use them often. The ship's power allocation feeds the engines, shields and weapons and is the original X-Wing from Lucasarts, so if your guns don't work then you need to reroute some more power away from either of the other two systems.

The first few missions are straightforward but this becomes increasingly more complex. If you're in Simulation mode so do the political shenanigans that go on behind your back. It will take all of your skill to balance combat with a cool head for choosing which part of the solar system requires your skills next.

Grolier are more famous for their interactive encyclopaedias: some of that depth of research has rubbed off and added a new dimension to the space genre in this classy game. Above average 3D graphics and a strong storyline rises Xenocracy to the surface. Multiple gaming options offer a diverse range of gameplay but beware it can get quite tough.

Maverick

Might and Magic VI
THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN

The local tavern seems a little desolate after Mavarian's arrival.

This guy would fit right in at one of the raves.

Role-players unite and go out and grab yourselves a copy of this from your nearest software store. Kind Behind is missing and the land of Enroth stands in danger of falling into the hands of the Cult of Baa, a Doomsday organisation that wants to usurp the Mandate of Heaven and bring chaos to the land. Your task will not be easy. You must guide your four adventurers through Enroth, accepting tasks from the local council. But even they cannot be trusted fully. Accept your quests wisely and don't be led astray by foolish, time-wasting quests which will lead you further away from your goal: the keys to the mighty Oracle. Fail and the world is plunged into a dark order from which it will never return. Win and - well you'll probably get a lot of gold pieces to go with your fame and glory.

Might and Magic VI is a role-playing game par excellence. Along with all of the traditional trappings, the game brings a 3D environment to your adventure. Walk around, enter buildings, navigate castles and dungeons and interact with your environment. It's not Quake 2 or Unreal by any means, but it's still a very detailed and moody 3D environment. The lighting is advanced and the hundreds of monsters you will face - although sprite-based - are animated from 3D models. It doesn't take long to be completely immersed in the world and its characters.

Speaking of characters, you have four to choose from. Starting a game gives you a menu from which to up their attributes a bit and grant them two bonus skills which might come in handy. You can choose from Knight, Cleric, Priest, Sorceror, Paladin, Archer, or Druid types to make up your party. Each of these has the chance to move up in class as experience increases. Knight can become Cavaliers and eventually Champions, Sorcerers can be promoted to Wizards and eventually Archmages if they survive long enough, and so on.

Weapons skill can also be assigned in this menu. You can arm your characters with staffs, daggers, swords, spears, bows or crossbows and maces. Each has certain strengths and weaknesses that you need to balance for maximum effect. Armour is dispensed in similar fashion with a choice of leather, chain or plate with an optional shield. Weapon and armour skill counts. Getting to be an experienced spearman requires - or, experience - but to get to an expert level, you need a mentor. There are training schools in your hometown so head off, spend some money and get the best training you can. Magic skills are also available and divide into Fire, Air, Water, Earth, Spirit, Body, Mind, Light and Dark. These last two cannot be assigned - they must be acquired during your quest.

As in all well-thought-out RPGs, your players accumulate other skills along the way. Bodybuilding is what it seems - characters who use it get more hit points. Others come in handy along the way like the ability to fix broken equipment or heightened perception for spotting traps.

PC CD-ROM

Role Playing Game

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 166 MMX 16 MB RAM 4 X CDROM 170 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 (DirectX5) 2 Mg SVGA	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 4 x CDROM 170 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 (DirectX5) 2 Mg PCI SVGA

Developer: 3DO

Publisher: Ubisoft Enter

Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse
Tel: (011) 315-1000

RRP: R 349.00

International Web Site
www.3do.com

Might & Magic VI (cont)

Sound it seems, has a lot to answer for.

certain spells. Game options including saving your game is accessed in the bottom right. Resting, casting spells and reading notes are to be found here too. NPCs - which you can bribe or threaten into following you around - have their own faces just above the active part spells, and a handy map sits in the top right. As the manual says, use this interface for too long and you'll start wanting to have it all the time! It's easy to access your character with a click.

repeat to enable your character's "quick combat" weapon. Spell casting is just as easy as are things like healing other characters.

Will you have time for all this? Clicking furiously around the screen as hordes of monsters throw themselves at your party makes for some sweat on the player's part. But - and here comes one of the games truly great touches - you have the option to play as a turn-based game a la AD&D. This is an excellent option to try out when just starting. You'll need to know what features like the speed of attack, speed of recovery, skill and weapon features do in combat situations so as to time your attacks properly. A single axe blow does lots of damage but it does take a few ticks to swing it around again, during which time that dragon could have coughed you into the next life.

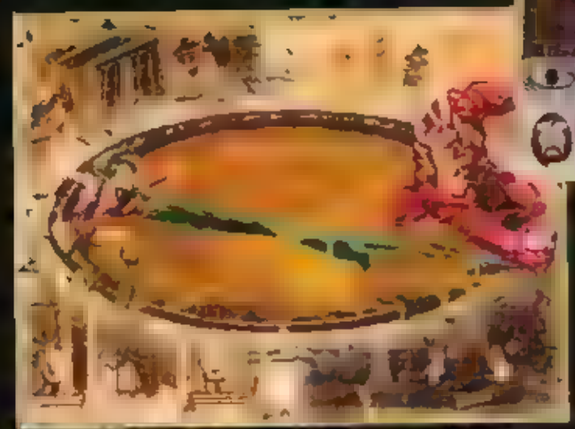
Conclusion

The manual is complete, fun to read and even contains a complete walk-through of your first quest to get you used to playing. It also gives you a chance to see how to buy and sell from the various shops around town. You'll need some advice too - chat to the people in the local tavern to find out what's the word around the campfire. Or trot along to the training school and get that Master skill in swordplay - you'll need it when attacked by giant spiders and hordes of evil skeletons. But finish the first task and then go on to your real quests.

The sound is realistic and the music changes to match what's happening on screen. The game also boasts a brilliant rendered introduction to get you in the mood.

Playing the game

Your main view of the game is divided into four main areas. The frontal view shows your current view of the world as if you were walking around in it - which of course you are. Each of your four player characters has an icon at the bottom with their faces and some symbols if they know certain spells. Game options including saving your game is accessed in the bottom right. Resting, casting spells and reading notes are to be found here too. NPCs - which you can bribe or threaten into following you around - have their own faces just above the active part spells, and a handy map sits in the top right. As the manual says, use this interface for too long and you'll start wanting to have it all the time! It's easy to access your character with a click.



Those in the know (read: the geeks) will spot Hexen in a key moment and I'll leave it to you.

Those in the know (read: the geeks) will spot Hexen in a key moment and I'll leave it to you.

If you're into Heroes and loving all the flexibility of a traditional game but on your PC, go for this production. It's flexible, fun to play and the graphics and sound do justice to the intricacies of role-playing. Highly recommended.

80 85 84 90 90 90

www.3do.com

OVERALL RATING

87

Need: Full TNT, Meridian 98 On The CD

Might & Magic: Duel's Tale Hardrock

+ Full Featured RPG
+ Huge Playing Life
+ Good Graphics

- Real-Time Combat Take - Feel On A Pentium II Average At

NIGHTMARE CREATURES

3rd Person Combat	
Min Required	**Recommended**
Pentium 133 MHz 16 MB RAM 2 X CDrom 1 Mg SVGA Video Card 20 Mg Hard Drive Space SB compatible Sound Win 95	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 4 X CDrom 2 Mg SVGA Video Card 20 Mg Hard Drive Space 3D Accelerator (3Dfx) Win 95
Developer	Kalisto Enter
Publisher	Activision
Supplier	Multimedia Warehouse Tel (011) 315-1000
RRP	R 299.00
International Web Site	www.activision.com

The box cover gives you a pretty good idea of what's in store in Nightmare Creatures. The game is as dark and frightening as the cover and despite a few quirks, fun to play. The best way of describing it would be to say that it's a mix-mass between Tekken and Tomb Raider. You play a lone hero who must save nineteenth-century London from a swarm of evil creatures unleashed by the enigmatic Adam Crowley. Kali and the city and the rest of the world will succumb to this twisted genius

Maverick takes on spiders, rats and gargoyles in the good ol' old fashion gaming

PC CD-ROM

and his dark brood. You have a choice of two characters, noble Ignatius and his quarter-staff or beautiful but deadly Nadia who sports a fine line in razor-sharp short swords. The way you do this is by running around Lara-style, solving puzzles and engaging in hand-to-hand combat with a whole bunch of nasties.

If you want to know what playing the game is like, think Tomb Raider. But where as our favourite cyber-babe seldom engage in hand-to-hand combat (in the first game anyway – can't speak for the second), your hero or heroine must resort to everything in sight, with a machine gun or shotguns. Instead you must master the intricacies of hand to hand combat with a

It's been a while since Maverick cleaned under his bed.

get at times to the occasional flint-lock pistol. These come in handy when your way is impeded by containers of explosive which dot the landscape or when you feel like wasting a shot on one of the bad guys. There are also other power-ups: mines, dynamite, smoke to help you repel the baddies. More about them in a minute.

The landscape is beautifully put together. Although the levels are more linear, in that you are pretty much forced down the route you should be taking, you really do feel you're stalking around old London the lighting is dark and creepy, especially in the corners of streets and in the abnormal number of graveyards that seem to be in the way. The music is Jack-The-Ripper style MIDI dirgeing pipe organs in minor keys and complements the gore when the nightmare creatures come out to play and stop you.

There are quite a few of these horrendous monsters. Zombies just smack you one and like very few hits to get down but as you would expect, get up again after a few seconds to have another go. This can be tricky when you think you've finished off one and then have a go at another bad guy only to be confronted by the Zombie again. The only way to be permanently rid of them is to slice them in half, a manoeuvre that's a couple of times with a combination of a jump kick or two and a swing of the sword. Like Tekken, there are some special combination moves to discover, like Down-Back/Kick for a spinning double swing of the sword. (That's an example on the way, find the moves out for yourself).

Werewolves show their ugly faces early in the game. The first one springs out of a scene passage. If you're like me, you will be sitting in your chair when that's happened. Take a deep breath to steel yourself, block its paws with your weapon and wait for your moment to hit back with a kick or a weapon stroke. As you progress giant rats, gargoyles and spiders join the fray and there are four bosses to get past.

A fine PC convert though you might find it a little outdated, and repetitive

Reviews

weeds of thrusts strokes and blocking moves. This is no easy task to begin with. Nightmare Creatures starts off hard to play even at the Easy skill on the opening level. As in Tomb Raider the view is a third person perspective. The camera movement is much snappier too. I lied about the guns by the way – you do

THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD

Action Shoot-Em-Up	
Min Required	**Recommended**
Pentium 90 MHz 16 MB RAM 4 X CDrom 2 Mg SVGA Video Card 80 Mg Hard Drive Space SB Compatible Sound Win 95	Pentium 133 MHz 32 MB RAM 4 X CDrom 3D Accelerator (3Dfx) 80 Mg Hard Drive Space SB Compatible Sound Win 95
Developer	Sega PC
Publisher	Sega PC
Supplier	Multimedia Warehouse Tel (011) 315-1000
RRP	R 299.00
International Web Site	www.sega.com
Local Download	www.gamesdomain.is.co.za
Size	154 Mg

The House of the Dead is the newest arcade-to-PC conversion from Sega. Falling into the action genre, THOTD takes place in a Zombie infested research laboratory where a genetic experiment has gone terribly wrong. Not much of a story line but it DOES have to be an addictive no frills action game and fulfils this role adequately.

THOTD plays just like a light gun arcade game, not surprising since it is based on one. Instead of using a light gun you must

PC CD-ROM

chainsaw wielding hillbillies to knife throwing midgets. Overall there are 16 varieties of the undead available and waiting to get a bite out of your flesh, both. One feature that makes THOTD addictive is the ability to shoot off body parts and watch them go flying in the air as blood sprays from an undead creature – maybe not an inspiring vision for everyone but it definitely gets a 10/10 for fun. The game doesn't just revolve around killing Zombies, you have to save trapped researcher who are being attacked by mindless ghouls. This reward you with power-ups in the form of an extra life or health should you save their arses.

At the end of every level a boss awaits your arrival, as is usual with games of this type. Before actually facing the boss you are notified of any known weaknesses. All you need to do is shoot at his weak spots and eventually kill him. I found all the bosses quite easy and none of them, except for the final one, offer any challenge. There is a multiplayer

Soul Assassin takes time away from his normal routine of haunting and spooking to give us the lowdown on House of the Dead.

Now, now don't chew with your mouth full.

option included in THOTD but there is no network support. You can play with a friend while one player uses one of the control options and the other player another (instead of one aiming target two will

aim with your mouse, gamepad or key board). Your aim is to kill as many undead creatures as possible while making your way through the levels and facing a few boss on each. It's quite exciting at first using these controls and shooting away but makes a change to have your hands on the real thing. Personally I found the mouse the best option and am one who never plays FPS with a mouse, shocking.

There are 3 basic modes of play in THOTD. Arcade PC and Boss PC mode you get to play as one of 6 characters with differing firepower, reload time, damage around, hit size and amount of ammo held per gun (as in the magazine, not the two modes of play are a breakdown of the PC version. The Arcade mode is exactly the same as PC with one exception: you don't get to choose a character and you simply play as the default. Boss mode offers players the chance to face any of the 4 bosses. Your objective is to kill the bosses in as short a time as possible and enter your name if you time is in the top 10. THOTD has more kinds of Zombies than an encyclopedia, everything from

Action Shoot-Em-Up: House of the Dead

Graphically THOTD doesn't introduce anything new with its 3-D engine and details, although sprites to portray a variety of objects, a definite plus given the previous generation engine. With 3-D accelerator the game plays smoothly and looks superb unfortunately in software mode all the textures seem pixelated and a lot darker than the accelerated mode.

There is nothing spectacular sound wise either, just a lot of moaning and groaning zombies with gunshots thrown into the mix. It does stand up to today's standards but leaves a taste of what could have been in your mouth. A good catchy sound track would have been a great idea in enhancing the shooting senses.

Overall THOTD is addictive. I found myself playing the game over and over again, even after I had finished it. The biggest complaint I have is its completion: having finished the whole game in just 4 hours after I opened it. Forking out R[illegible] odd bucks for a game that won't even keep you occupied for long might sound ridiculous, but you will find yourself playing it over and over and over again.

REVIEWS UNDER FIRE

PC CD-ROM

Wading through the games that are up for review normally ends up with the real so-hyped titles ending up at the bottom of the pile. This time was a little different as an interesting title called MotorMash caught my attention. Based on similar gameplay and dynamics to the popular Micro Machines series, which I played on my trusty old Commodore Amiga, it follows the basic rules of good fun and simple mechanics.

With more and more games supporting 3D Accelerators [illegible] so that even the [illegible] titles support their features. MotorMash is no different and has some impressive

graphics [illegible] ware platforms. The intro is nothing to gauge the game by and doesn't do the game any justice. A better job could have been done to set the scene for the cartoon characters and [illegible] racing

these can be raced on a selection of 6 courses filled with obstacles, power-ups, jumps and different terrain. The courses allow the car upgrade option of turbo acceleration, combined with challenging courses and some pretty effective computer controlled AI. This makes for close and frustrating racing that has you gritting your teeth when an opponent purposely knocks you out of contention.

You have a choice of either keyboard or gamepad to control the vehicle. A simple button selection of forward, back, left, right and action buttons keep the control easy to master. The only problem I found was that you could not change the sensitivity of the controls

that could not be overcome over three machines, though a real steering wheel did not show [illegible] symptoms.

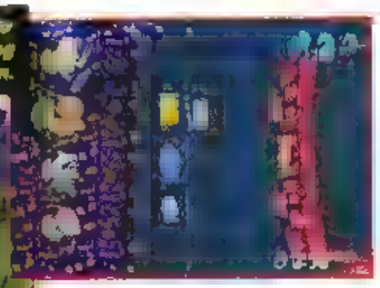
There are 2 different player profiles each with different ways to overcome the terrain and track hazards. Strategies to be planned and used. Hunting and boosting your opponents is considered to be an art of timing and knowledge of the courses. The more you race and play certain spots and using your power-ups and are critical to gaining the advantage. A slight criticism is to be mentioned about the [illegible] intention of helping you, but end up costing you.

There is a problem with the controls of the game and it does waiver because of the case of completing the single player modes. After a few days of practice should take the average player little time at all to complete the game. The only help in ageing this title is the network option as you challenging your friends and family in a fun session of bumper cars.

MotorMash is an enjoyable interlude to the fast serious games that are packing the market. If you can overlook the slight problems and enjoy the fun gameplay that comes with Micro Machines then it's worth a look.

MotorMash is an enjoyable interlude to the fast serious games that are packing the market: Storm visits Cartoon Town.

Gotta get me one of those Submarines



Now I'm even seeing Godzilla in games.

Set in a cartoon era of bomb-ridden viewed racing, your objectives are simple win. You have 6 race options creating a range of different racing modes, each with their own objectives. Some of the more playable are the knockout. Beat the [illegible] league modes. All of

and the sound effects don't make up for it, even though they are funny and inventive. A few speed problems were found in racing mode

Role Playing Game

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 133Mhz 16 MB RAM 4 X CDrom VESA Video Card 30 Mg Hard Drive Space DirectX5 comp. Sound Win 95	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 8 X CDrom 3D Accelerator Card 30 Mg Hard Drive Space DirectX5 comp. Sound Win 95

Developer: Ocean

Publisher: Infogrames

Supplier: PCM Datatec
Tel (011) 233-1074

RRP: R 259.00

International Web Site
www.ocean.co.uk

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Turning on to strategy

Strategy games ain't my thang. Sure I can appreciate the quality and addictive nature of them, but I prefer creeping down a corridor with a shotgun, or zooming down a canyon at 300 feet. It's the complexity probably - I still like myself just can't get everything organised at the right pace and the right time to do any damage to the enemy. Computer AI or human, but it's kudos to Deadlock - a turn based strategy game with a nice polished storyline and enough similarity to SimCity to keep me interested. The game puts you in charge of one of seven possible species. Your goal is to access the planet Xyth and gain all the wealth and prosperity finding the answer to the riddle of the shrines will bring you.

You can't get there immediately. It will take several campaigns on other planets before you're strong and advanced enough to make that final push. Winning a game means being in control of a shrine for a certain period of time or you could construct five cities and win the planet for your race. Each race has advantages and disadvantages of course. Some races look like a cross between scorpions and swamp thing - move fast but you can't kick their butts in the battlefield. Humans are slower but better at building strong economies.

The gameplay's the thing

It's quite a lot like SimCity. Choose the race you want to be, learn its strengths and weaknesses, and then make sure your population is kept warm, well fed and well defended. You must take care of the planning for food, minerals, defense, technology and so on. Then leave the little creatures to get on with it. If you're rather the type who enjoys Age of Empires at start off, then the game may seem slow and perhaps a bit too methodical. It is slow by comparison. Some of the big scenarios are just that - big. A turn in the game can take ages with a game going on for over a hundred turns. Relax, grab some coffee and take your time.

Combat is decided by the game, so don't think pointing and clicking as fast as your opponents will get you anywhere. You can play against others over a LAN, modem or null modem cable although the patience of the players might be tested. Accolade have put in a great little feature to speed up play in this regard - a timer. There's nothing like the clock ticking away in the corner to spur you to make a decision to build another few. Universities or war the look and feel is isometric or top down - again very similar to SimCity and Simcity 2000. The game is interspersed with great video clips and the characters and models are professional. Music is a bit lack-ing here - but then we've been spoilt listening to Carnival.

Patience is a virtue...

It installs easily but beware the minimum option - you'll need around 90MB - then there are long waits at the end of each turn. The full 290Mb is well worth the space it takes.

Impatient real-time strategy players might not appreciate the unique blend of Sim's and Age of Empires (which is the best way I can describe it). But if you're prepared to think a bit and keep interested in a game that will take thousands of hours to finish, then give Deadlock a spin - it has enough new twists on an already saturated genre to be interesting, and is actually quite addictive. I'm now comfortable enough with it to give one of its features me bi-weekly a try - a nice side effect.

Malwick

Turn Based Strategy

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 100 16 MB RAM 2 X CDrom 1 Mg SVGA 60 Mg Hard Drive Space Win 95 (DirectX 5	Pentium 166 MMX 32 MB RAM 8 X CDrom 2 Mg SVGA 290 Mg HDrive Space Win 95 DirectX 5!

Developer: Accolade

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Supplier: EA Africa
Tel: (011) 807-6551/2
RRP: R 299.00

International Web & Demo Site
www.accolade.com (ISS & 28.4 Mg)
3DFX Downloads
www.gamesdomain.co.za
Size: 28.4 Mg

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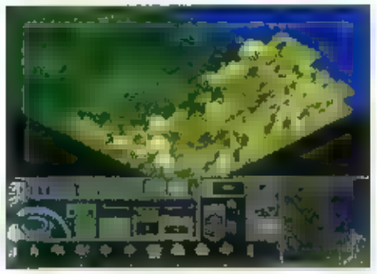
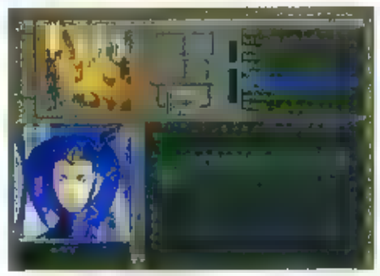


SimCity meets Civilization



An in-depth help guide puts you on the right foot

'If you're prepared to think a bit and keep interested in a game that will take thousands of hours to finish, then give Deadlock II a spin.'

CRIME KILLER

Driving Shoot-Em-Up

Developer: Interplay

Publisher: Interplay

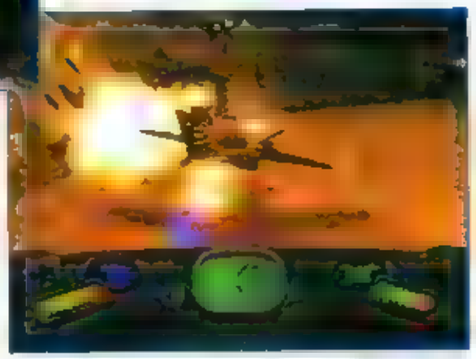
Supplier: EA Africa
Tel: (011) 803-1212
RRP: R 389.00

International Web Site
www.interplay.com

The year is 2015. You are a newly qualified Officer 88 working for the Los Diablos Police Department. A failed experiment has left the city in chaos and emerging gangs are organising themselves adding to the crime rate. You are a Quake like Crime killer and your job is simple, you have to make crime pay.

Crime killer takes place over 15 levels of non-stop driving and shooting action as you pursue the worst of the cities criminals. At your disposal is the latest in state of the art experimental vehicles in the form of a police car, bike and wing (flying vehicle). Each of the levels present true 3D cityscapes with buildings and civilian vehicles moving around. The civilian vehicles are a bit irritating as I found myself banging into them regularly but this does add a level of realism. In the event that you actually destroy too many of the civilian vehicles they will start taking shots at you.

Occasionally a police dispatcher informs your character of any hostile vehicles in the area and your job is either to utterly destroy them or partly them with your patriot weapon so the occupants can be interrogated for information. This can be tough since a lot of the vehicles you pursue are faster and better equipped than you and can do a lot of damage. These mini-missions the dispatcher send you on can be anything from illegal parking to robberies in progress. The one gripe I have about the computer controlled criminals is that they tend to follow the same route through the streets over and over again, you just have to figure out a particular cars route and ambush him/her/it/whatever because a snap. Interplay should have made them more intelligent - it seems so unrealistic that criminals will keep going round and round in circles, but then again.



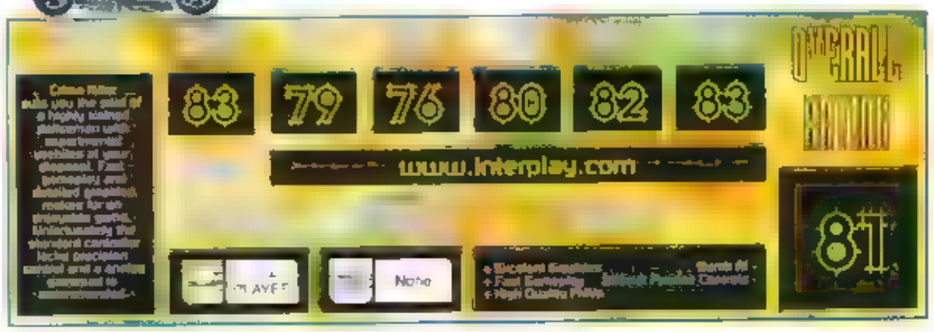
Vigilante Cops give new meaning to the term 'crime doesn't pay'

After every level you are greeted with one of the 20 cutscenes available. They are high quality rendered scenes with lots of action to them. It would have been great if this advanced the story line using these, but one can only dream. The developers opted to advance the story using a text based mission brief-ing screen. Maybe next time.

Crime killer also features a split screen two-player deathmatch game where you get to choose your vehicle of choice and take on a friend in the battle for road supremacy.

In game graphics exhibit a high frame rate with high detail textures making all the vehicles and even the city blocks look realistic. The best feature graphics wise has to be the explosions and weapon effects - they are some of the best I have seen on a PlayStation.

The controls via the standard gamepad are responsive but not enough so - precise aiming is a difficult task when you have to tap tap tap on the D-Pad. Like most new PlayStation games there is support for analogue controllers which give a greater degree of control and I highly recommend one. Where Crime Killer stands out is its high quality graphics and animations - gives gamers the opportunity to take the law into their own hands and offers extremely fast gameplay. If you are sick and tired of going around attacking and having a go at killing while speeding this is definitely for you.



I'm sure all racing fanatics have dreamed of sitting behind the wheel of a 300Hp rally car while approaching a hairpin bend. Feeling the adrenalin rush of pushing the car to the limit on rough and uncharted terrain. Breaking into a side ways slide at break neck speed, then pushing the pedal to it's maximum as the car pulls you out of a death defying smash. Maybe we dreamt of these stunts but we certainly have little chance of ever living them. Now the opportunity has come our way by means of Colin McRae Rally from Codemasters, and it's a hell of a lot safer.

Based on the same award winning graphics engine from TOCA Touring Car, its little wonder that CMR is one of the best looking racing Sims on the market. We have become accustomed to Codemasters unique gift of bringing the feeling of true-life action to the Playstation, and with CMR nothing changes. Dynamic lighting and smooth frame rates are amazing to watch as well as a multitude of special effects. The graphics engine even reproduces sun glaring, dust, snow, mud and much more with-

Rally Racing Sim

Developer: Sony Interactive St

Publisher: Sony Interactive St

Supplier: Star Kinekor Int. Tel: (011) 445-7900
Multimedia Warehouse Tel: (011) 315-1000

RRP: R 399.00

International Web Site
www.codemasters.com

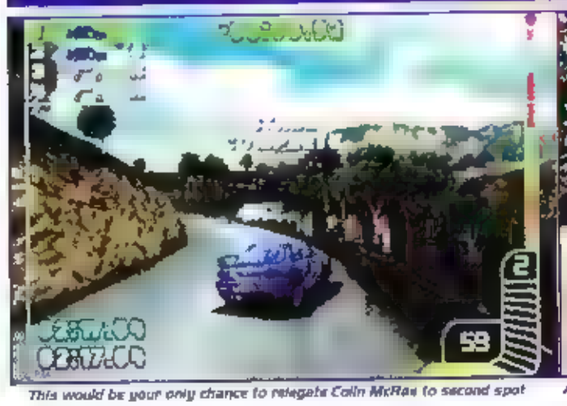
out dulling any weight on the Playstation. Small amounts of texture splitting rarely occur and are only visible if you actually looking for the problem.

Colin McRae Rally is three time Network Q Rally champion and the youngest driver ever to win the World Rally Championship title lends his name and voice talents to this ambitious simulation. From the offset CMR stands out as a contender for the best racing sim of all time. A well-presented intro greets you with a flourish of Colin McRae driving skills. It's a little short but well done nonetheless.

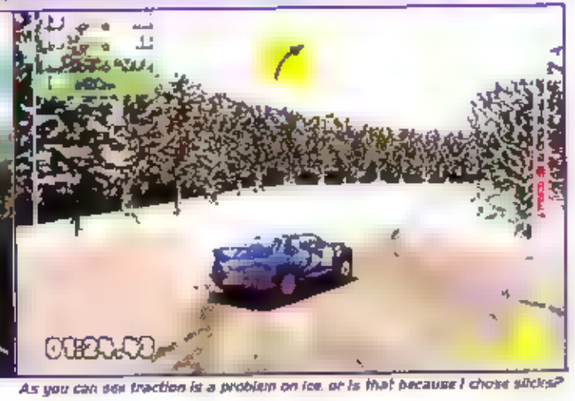
CMR offers you a choice of eight of the most exciting rally cars racing in today's championships. The R2.5 million Subaru Impreza specially designed for Colin McRae stops on the other choices of the Mitsubishi Lancia, Volkswagen Renault Seat and the Skoda. Other special cars can be won by completing certain objectives such as winning six championship stages or winning an actual rally.

All of these vehicles are then put to the test on eight of the toughest and most treacherous rallying terrains known to man and span the four corners of the globe. If the high corners and jumps don't perturb you, then the wide range of weather conditions that include snow, fog, and rain will certainly make driving conditions tougher than they already are. If that still offers too little of a

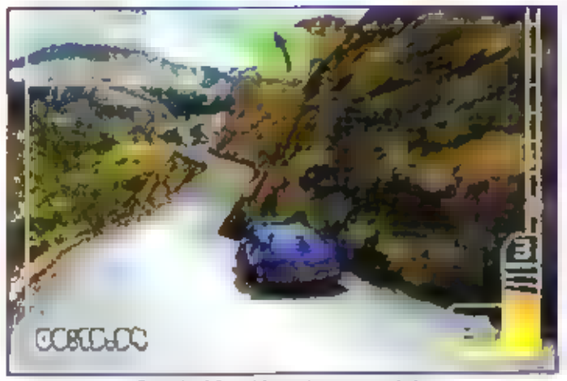
'There is no doubt that Colin McRae Rally is simply the best money can buy in the rally driving genre.' Storm jumps into the navigates seat.



This would be your only chance to relegate Colin McRae to second spot



As you can see traction is a problem on ice, or is that because I chose slicks?



Guess don't forget to pack your parachute

challenge then the visibility conditions might be hampered by the eight different times of day that span from early morning to night. All these conditions are realistically recreated and some of the stages are even more impressive in design than the tracks in Gran Turismo, which says a lot in any gamers terms. Different obstacles ranging from pot holes to sheep don't hamper your objective of finishing first, and with Colin McRae breathing down your neck continually it makes it even more difficult.

CMR is quite simply one of the most dynamic games available and Codemasters have struck gold with their gameplay once again. The cars handle and react in an unbelievably realistic manner and changes can be made to customise your car to better performances on stages. A crew of dedicated mechanics await your arrival at each stage to tweak and repair your vehicle.

Different tyres, gear ratios, steering sensitivity, suspension and braking biases must be decided upon at the beginning of each stage and correct decisions will be rewarded in times recorded. But quick times do have a down side, the vehicle has wear and tear that comes from mistimed corners and reckless driving tactics. Luckily your

crew is on hand to repair any damage overnight, but there is a price to pay time! Yes, the crew only has a specific amount of time to complete repairs and changes, normally about 60 minutes. This is sometimes too little time to repair everything and you'll have to decide which are the more important repairs to make.

CMR offers four different types of races that can be played fully on novice or intermediate levels of difficulty. You can only play on expert level if you've won in the top six of an intermediate rally and then is the real challenge begins. The modes include Rally, which allows you to play a single rally that is made up of stages. Time Trial allows you to play any stage of a rally as one or two players, but there are no rehalt options available. In two Player mode you can take out a friend or enemy with Splitscreen. Alternate one after the next will aim to conquer and Arcade head to head with collisions. Finally there is the main option of Championship mode which is in an entire season of eight different counties with varying weather conditions and time of day. So those days of dreaming are over you can become the World Rally Champion your only obstacle is Colin McRae and your ability to throw caution to the wind.

A special mention must be made about the Rally School option that teaches novices and pros how to handle a rally car. A number of driver exercises have to be completed and scores are given by Mr McRae himself. An interactive introduction is shown prior to starting each assignment and running constructive commentary by Colin keeps you aware of how you are doing. This addition was a great start for those who are for the big things to come in CMR. Codemasters have also started to tie in the sport's governing body dedicated to driver training calls and famous decisions in the rally scene. Colin McRae's relentless driver calls the shots with precision and is crucial to your chances of winning any championship.

Without a doubt Colin McRae Rally is the best rally driving game ever released and if it weren't for Gran Turismo it would have debatably been the best racing game ever. The only notable differences comes by way of the depth, but even then its not that far off. Whatever you do, go and get Colin McRae Rally, it will consume many hours of your precious relaxation time and more.

Now where's that crash helmet.

Storm

See you even get to choose your favourite video arm trainer

DEAD OR ALIVE

Beat-Em-Up

Developer:	TECMO
Publisher:	Sony Interactive St
Supplier:	Ster Kinekor Int Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP:	R 399,00

International Web Site
http://www.playstation-europe.com

With the hoards of fighting games on the market for the PlayStation, it seems a little arrogant of developers to keep the gameplay levels from changing. Nevertheless, this genre has occupied top spots on console charts for longer than I can remember and shows no signs of holding up the addictiveness that grips gamers of all ages. One such title that has had a large amount of good and bad publicity that has finally hit our shores, is Dead or Alive from Tecmo.

The first sighting of Dead or Alive was on the Sega 3 Board that boasted Virtual Fighter 2 and was then ported to the Saturn about a year ago. What made DoA a symbolic game of this genre and era was its inept detail for gravity. The game became more famous for its female animation and bosom movements than for its ability to entertain.

Explosive punches, isn't that cheating?

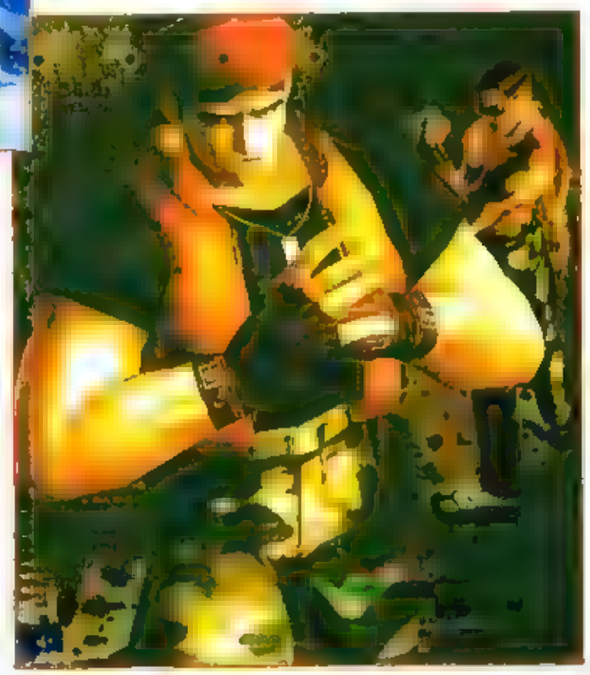
Nothing much has changed in the making department and the bounce has become even more pronounced than in its predecessor. In some instances the journalists have become so much more enthusiastic about this small irritating feature that adverse publicity has crept into a thoroughly enjoyable game.

Graphically DoA is superb and has changed dramatically from its original, mainly because the graphics had to be totally redone for the PlayStation. The character animations are realistic and quick, and both the female and male characters' movements are smooth and rhythmical. The game uses a 3D-polygon engine that shows no signs of squared ruff edges, a rounded pattern is used to create some of the most life-like animations yet seen on the PlayStation. Though not as quick as other games of this genre, it is hardly noticeable to the common eye. Backgrounds and ring features are not DoA's strong point and need something extra to grasp attention, but then the emphasis is on the fighting and not its surroundings.

Another mechanics feature to DoA is the sound, which was the normal screeches and barks that accompany these types of games. Though the sound isn't fantastic, it's common knowledge that this feature is normally similar in performance to the full spectrum of beat-em-ups. As usual we have to translate by way of understanding gestures what is being said, because of the Japanese speech, but by now most of us could almost speak the language.

The original eight characters have been reassembled to terrorise their opponents with swift and unique moves as well as two new extra characters and a significantly more difficult boss. What caught my attention was the human nature of the characters, no sign of robots, lizards or abnormal creatures. The story is simple and overused with you having to enter a DoA tournament to become the ultimate fighter by use of controlled aggression.

A wonderful array of moves is available to each individual character and set up to watch when used in long combinations. Special Kung Fu techniques are recreated to almost give a feeling of being in the movie Kickboxer. A controversial change has been made in the button selection by way of a 'hold' instead of a 'block' button. Honestly, this subtle change is one of the better and



Are those your biceps or are you just happy to see me?

Dead or Alive (cont)

adds to the plethora of throws, moves and realism. Once mastered the hold button can be a deadly asset that normally has you countering deadly blows for a back and forth battle. I found that most of the fights ended on a fairly close scoring average and never had many perfect finishes, but that could be due to my inability to keep my combos flowing. The easier routines are quick to learn but the higher scoring moves require some pretty awesome coordination, if not pulled off in time you could end up with a neck cracker of note. An excellent training mode will help you master these routines and is one of the best of its kind in this genre. DoA comes with full Dual Shock controller support and is recommended if you are looking to really feel those killing blows.

There is a large selection of gaming modes within DoA namely the standard tournament, Vs, Training, Survival and Team Battle modes, but DoA also has the Karate mode in which players can choose whether to take on 30, 50 or 100 consecutive fights. A percentage score is tallied after you complete the total amount of contests and will definitely test your skill to end up with a perfect 100.

A small amount of FMV is seen at the beginning of the game and should have been a little more intense but nonetheless it was up to the high standards of the battles can be altered in the Options section including damage effects, ring size, fighting modes and even the amount of speech.

A nice touch in DoA comes by the way of there being no ring-out area. This has been replaced by an explosive sector that if knocked down on, will hurtle you 20 feet into the air creating some extra damage to your already torn pride. If everything happens to go your way when completing certain sections in the game, you will uncover new costumes of your characters total. If over 100 new costumes are to be found in DoA.

Within the boundaries of this genre, I have found DoA to be of high standards. DoA comes with a high regard from me because of its attention to a real life scenario, exceptional graphics and intense gameplay. As for the bouncing female organs, yes it's a bit excessive, but if you are to be true to the simulation like that's how it would be. Most gamers would end up turning this feature off and get on with the game itself. Nevertheless Dead or Alive is the closest you can come to a Tekken killer and deserves to be put on the podium with the rest of the best.

A quick and easy way to earn frequent flyer miles.

I wonder if this guy subscribes to the date line?

VIGILANTE 8

Vehicle Combat Driving Sim sounds like a mouthful, but is a genre pretty much unused. The last of this generation game that was worth anything was the critically acclaimed Twisted Metal 2 which was released in the late months of 1996. That's a good two years of waiting for fans of this genre that is comparable to Doom on wheels. Many PlayStation owners are still playing the now relatively classic Twisted Metal 2 in the hope that a product will be released that can stand against the unchallenged leader in this genre. Well, Activision have released Vigilante 8, a 70's style game built around the Lucasarts Driving Game engine. Based loosely on Activision's Interstate 76, we are submerged into the era of bell-bottoms and funky music. The story unfolds as a plot is developed to destroy the American economy by the Coyotes, a group of bikers who have hip-hopped down and grooved their way in by releasing Vigilante 8, a 70's style game built around the LucasArts Driving Game engine.

Based loosely on Activision's Interstate 76, we are submerged into the era of bell-bottoms and funky music. The story unfolds as a plot is developed to destroy the American economy by the Coyotes, a group of bikers who have hip-hopped down and grooved their way in by releasing Vigilante 8, a 70's style game built around the LucasArts Driving Game engine.

Beat-Em-Up

Developer	Luxoflux
Publisher	Activision
Supplier	Multimedia Warehouse Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP	R 459.00

International Web Site
www.activision.com

Based loosely on Activision's Interstate 76, we are submerged into the era of bell-bottoms and funky music. The story unfolds as a plot is developed to destroy the American economy by the Coyotes, a group of bikers who have hip-hopped down and grooved their way in by releasing Vigilante 8, a 70's style game built around the LucasArts Driving Game engine.

Everybody's GOLF™

Golf Simulation

Sony Interactive St.

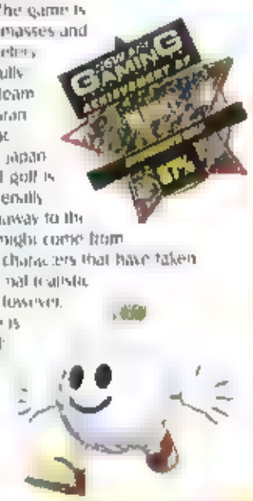
Sony Interactive St.

Ster Kinekor Int
Tel (011) 445-7900
R 399.00

http://www.playstation-europe.com

Golf titles on the PlayStation are few and far between with the Actua golf series from Gremlin having been the only title that deserves a mention until now. Everybody's Golf is not a catchy marketable name that is being endorsed by well known players or tournaments. It's quite simply a game that has the addictive spot-on feel of the controller imprint on your hand after hours of straight playing. The game is designed for the masses and not only for the series few golf lovers. Fully designed by the team that brought us Gran Turismo, which incidentally resides in Japan where the love of golf is growing phenomenally.

The only takeaway to the die-hard golfers might come from the cartoon-style characters that have taken the role from normal realistic looking players. However, though the game is more on par with the younger generation because of the characters graphics, it does not detract in anyway from the realism of the true-life simulation. In fact it has better physics than any golf game available on PlayStation and deserves to stand with the best on any platform. EG has extremely impressive graphics and a wonderful array of special effects that are normally associated with serious golf sims.



Whether I play in real-life or on the PSX I still end up the bunker

Once you have played a round or two on the first course available you'll start to realise the amount of detail that went into this production. Starting off with a selection of a female and a left handed male as your key choices of golfers, you are suddenly aware of the need for golfers with better skills and attributes. These come by the way of challenging and defeating 10 other players, which then gives you the option to use the golfer. EG uses a unique experience points technique that's modified after every round and stored in your memory card. Higher points are allocated to the player if he finishes in the top five on the leaderboards.

The various inventive courses available on EG that are not available until you have built up enough experience points. A huge amount of imagination and skill is needed to some of the rules which are designed to challenge you in more ways than just power swing, angle lies, different stages of rough, sand, cart paths and even divots are a few of the elements that react realistically to the club selection and swing. An all round thrilling game which comes with all bells and whistles. Overall each hole is well set with 3 view point options and 3 shot modes.

EG has some unique game features with a Mini-Golf Mode that has you putting your way around it's adventurous hole-out courses. An educational Tutorial Mode teaches the novice golfer the ins and outs of the interface and physics of true golf. Even the seasoned Pro might learn a tip or two. All Super Shots are scored automatically in memory for future advancement. Players can also unlock hidden secrets once they reach certain levels.

Everybody's Golf may look like a kiddies game but that's just how the younger generation will enjoy hacking around the virtual courses. But what is there for the seasoned veteran? Well in one word should sum it up - everything. No stone has been left unturned in the effort to simulate the interactive golfing experience. If you are a lover of the sport or just looking for a fun challenging game then Everybody's Golf is the one for you.

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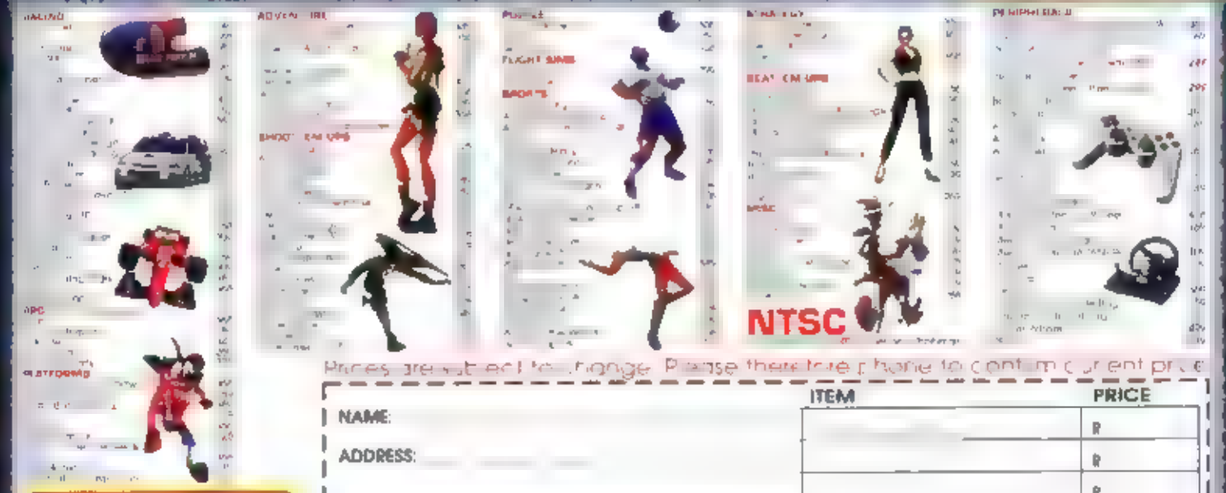

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Within the confounds of a fantasy world comes the story of unjoly bravery called Cardinal Syn. It all began in the Blood Lane thousands of years ago. A mysterious traveller roamed the earth with his Book of Knowledge and demanded peace amongst the fighting clans. With this he divided up the book between the clans and was never to be seen again. Sooner had he left than the Clans returned to their old ways, until a witch of immense power appeared and pieced the Book of Knowledge together and scrolled the pages on three powerful swords. A tournament would then be held as a member of each Clan would fight to [illegible] thy of becoming Supreme Ruler of the Clans, and the Clans won't you. This might sound unoriginal but within the arcade-fighting genre this is more than we are used to and it creates an exciting setting to what should come.

CS has 18 playable characters of which you can play any of the first eight and by smashing the seven remaining Clan leaders, you are then entitled to fight against the eight alternatives. Each character is superbly designed and animated. Each with their own style, charisma, weapons and special moves. You will have choices of the Egyptian-styled female Nephra, the underground Scotsman Chieftain McKreig, the zombified Plague and the incredibly annoying Jinkster, amongst others. Every character comes with an intro movie and designated area for the backdrop to his fight. Graphically CS does not disappoint in any [illegible] texture clipping problems. Sony has taken the fantasy idea and worked well with the sets that they've created, with a include an underground mine for McKreig, a Pyramid Tomb for Nephra and a slime pit for Plague.

A tremendous amount of blood is lost in most battles and is normally splattered all over the walls at some stage (this option can be turned off). Fight scenes are simulated realistically with the clatter of steel on steel and the swoosh of the weapons as they fly through the air. A large amount of moves have been well thought out and correctly addressed to each character and are easily learned in the Training Mode available. The in-game sound does not overwhelm in any way and needs something extra to uphold the standard set by the graphics.

CS offers a full 3D environment that allows the player to move around the arena in any direction. Each arena is enclosed and puts an end to the traditional square ring out platforms that we have become accustomed to. Each arena has a collection of treasure chests filled with odd surprises that include weapon power ups, booby traps, health, magic spells and more. This adds an element of strategy to the game. The fighter who can pick the correct box might end up with the advantage of an extra ability. Within the game there are also hazards such as foxie slime pits and molten lava that need to be avoided at all costs, if not you will pay [illegible].

Everything about Cardinal Syn up until here sounds like its set to enter the market with a boom and break all records, even collect the coveted Excellence Award until we took a look at the gameplay! Unfortunately CS has failed at the last and most important hurdle. Sony has committed a cardinal sin in not finding and eliminating the one repeat move that cannot be countered. As every knowledgeable gamer knows, if this happens to creep into a fighting game, you can kiss the playability, continuity and control goodbye. I cannot see how a reputable developer such as Sony could allow such a common mistake to pass through their stringent testing. Not only the move, but also the computer controlled AI are totally predictable and should have you winning on the hardest level within hours. This is honestly not true value for money and does not justify the hard-earned Rands it costs.

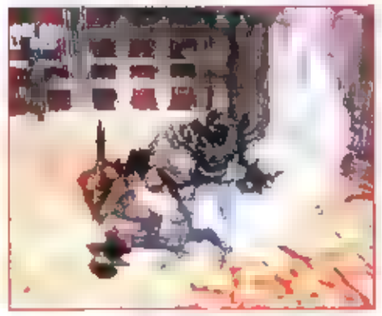
One small consolation to this is that it only affects the single player mode and would obviously fail in against a human opponent. There is also Dual Shock controller support and it works well with the effects and power that CS produces.

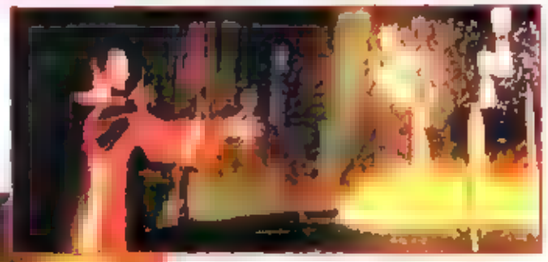
A very unfortunate slip has led to a game that should have been a classic becoming nothing more than an average production. At least we know that if Sony take the criticism and learn from it, we can expect a cracker of a game from Cardinal Syn 2.

Beat-Em-Up

Developer	Sony Interactive St
Publisher	Sony Interactive St
Supplier	Ster Kinekor Int Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP	R 369.00

International Web Site
http://www.playstation-europe.com





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Cardinal SYN (cont)

Touch me in that way again and you'll lose your jewels.

The Finkster's den has some architectural promise

RoboCop meets Braveheart, all we are missing now is the make-up girl

Spawn the comic book series has enjoyed a huge following and has received many awards and accolades over the years. The movie was an average affair relying more on special effects than the fantastic story that originally brought it so much success. Now Sony has released the Playstation incarnation of Spawn Perhaps now, in this medium, Spawn will be digitally redeemed.

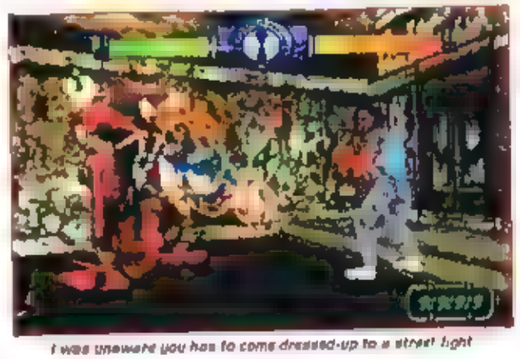
Superhero graveyard.

After reading the comic book and watching the movie most Spawn fans might be forgiven for thinking that the conversion to a console game would be the next smart logical step. Fair enough. But we all know what movie-to-game conversions end up looking like and unfortunately Spawn The Eternal is no exception to this rule. It seems as if the console game conversion is the final resting place of superheroes after they've starred in their own movies.

In Spawn The Eternal you play Al Simmons who is out to set the wrongs of society right (the story of how Al became Spawn is too long and involved to get into here - if you need to know more, get it on video). On your quest to conquer evil you need to explore a number of levels 3rd person perspective style. When running into the wall gives the action changes to a side on beat-em-up style. This mixing of genres sounds good on paper but often too little attention is lavished on one area leaving the other untouched. In Spawn's case this combination fails in both regards.

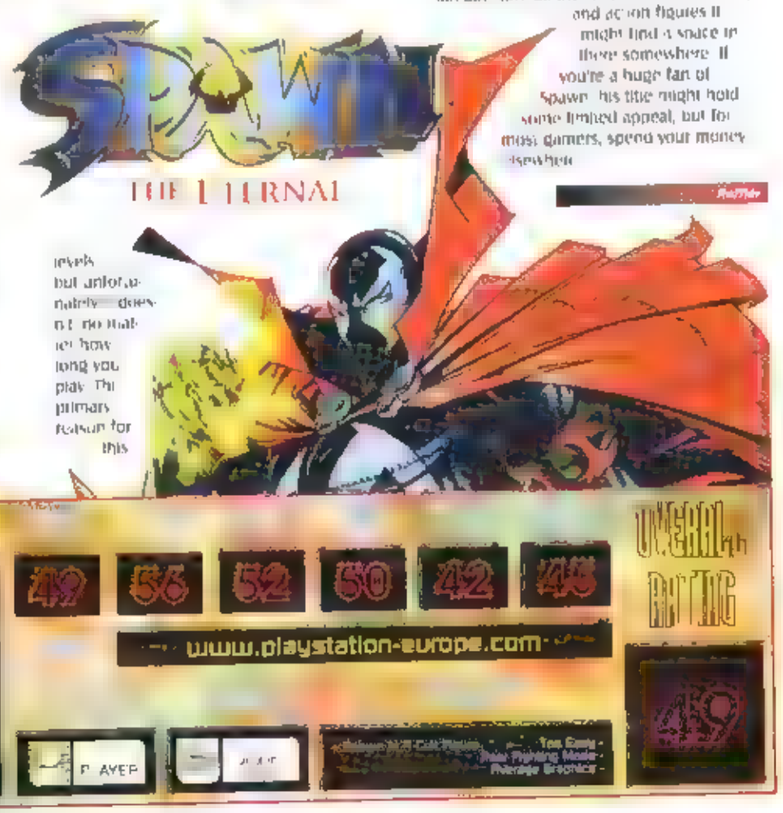
Haven't we been here before?

The overall idea is to explore each level collecting orbs, keys and pitting your skills against deadly enemies. After about six bad guys have been defeated you slowly discover that all it really takes to kill any opponent are a few quick kicks and it's lights out. Mastering this technique effectively reduces the time you'll be playing as there is little resistance from the enemies. Fights don't last long and there isn't any sense of satisfaction as you deliver the final deathblow. The pace of fighting to exploring isn't well balanced and you often find yourself wandering around each location bored



I was unaware you has to come dressed-up to a street fight

ales a dismal one right from the start. If you're a big spawn fan you'll keep trying to convince yourself that it might get better after the first four



levels but unfortunately does not prove for how long you play. The primary reason for this is that the scenery is a bland, uninspired blocky mess - some serious clipping problems invade the environment right through the game to add to the long list of problems. It's the old sewer and warehouse exploration we've seen a hundred times before through the first few levels you slowly realise that the most exciting part of this game is kicking boxes apart to see if they reveal anything useful. When you actually find something on your exciting box kicking adventure, it takes a while to collect or pick up the item due to the flawed collision detection. Animation finds new meanings.

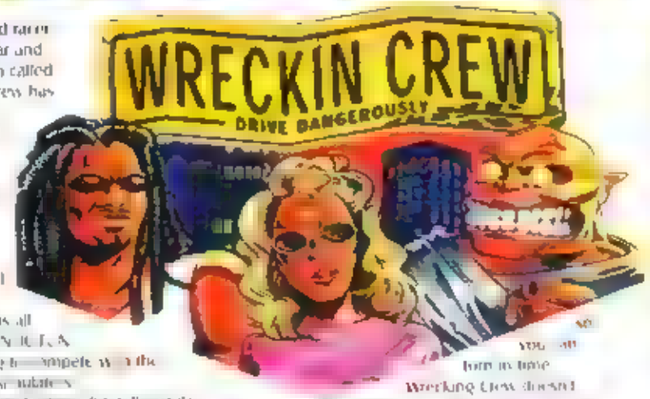
Spawn The Eternal is endorsed by Todd McFarlane Productions and if you already have all those Spawn T-shirts, mugs and action figures it might find a space in there somewhere. If you're a huge fan of Spawn this title might hold some limited appeal, but for most gamers, spend your money elsewhere.

3rd Person Action

Developer	Sony Interactive St
Publisher	Sony Interactive St
Supplier	Ster Kinekor Int Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP	R 369.00

International Web Site
http://www.playstation-europe.com

new hotrod racing game from Telstar and Quicksilver called Wreckin Crew has just hit the shelves. It's an arcade style hotrod romp and intended to be the sort of fun back into racing. In the words of one of the creators Wreckin Crew is all about arcade racing. It's not trying to compete with the serious racing simulators.



Wreckin Crew features 8 totally wacky characters each with his/her own souped up hotrod to race. The characters range from Rastafarian to a two headed freak and even a grandma is included.

The 20 tracks feature shortcuts and alternate routes all the racing are packed with powerups. You get to race in Paris, New York, Sydney, the Amusement park setting. While winning is the main objective Wreckin Crew shows that more than winning and if you can take out a couple of hotrods while doing it, why not. Gamers are shown their powerful hotrods from a side view of the action. While this is a great idea it doesn't work as well as it should. You just don't have enough time to look at the scenery as you're too busy trying to stay on the road. The tracks are made up of many different sections and it doesn't add anything extra to the gameplay. I found the default weapons awkward since you can only shoot to the sides of your vehicle and the other vehicles spend most of the time either in front or behind you. This makes shooting them difficult to say the least. There's always the special weapon that you found sideways but the way it is such that you never know if it will work.

Three modes of play are included with Wreckin Crew. In Arcade mode you get to race one race and retire with millions of cop cars to Championship mode where you progress for points like a league and the final amount depends on your finishing position. Very tough to race all the tracks and try to become champion. The three mode is where you and a buddy can have a go at each other via a split screen mode.

The standard gamepad gives adequate control over your hotrod, you just need to know the ins out of all the courses

A typical day in Holbrow after a life threatening car chase

monotonous. There is thankfully an option to switch them off.

Wreckin Crew uses a 3D polygon and sprite based engine and very colourful tex

Racing Shoot-Em-Up

Developer:	Telstar
Publisher:	Telstar
Supplier:	Ster Kinekor Int Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP:	R 399.00

International Web Site
www.interplay.com

tures to represent the wacky environments that are a treat to the eye. There are some problems that occur in the form of clipping. There are lots of objects you can race through which is fun having fun whatever on your hotrod most notably a huge fountain on one of the courses.

While Wreckin Crew is fun it also lacks depth and doesn't keep your attention span for very long. All the races Playstation games are going for these days as well as not quite as fast as the other racing shooting games out there at the moment before even considering Wreckin Crew I would however recommend it to anyone who is looking for a game to buy for young kids. There is no graphical violence and the bright colours and unsophisticated play should appeal to children.

Spice Girls Interactive

Developer:	Sony Interactive St
Publisher:	Sony Interactive St.
Supplier:	Ster Kinekor Int
	Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP:	R 279.00

International Web Site
http://www.playstation-europe.com

These days the words interactive and multimedia are thrown around so liberally that one could get away with calling an ATM transaction an interactive experience. So it is with great caution that you should approach Spice World and join the Spice Girls in their own interactive world.

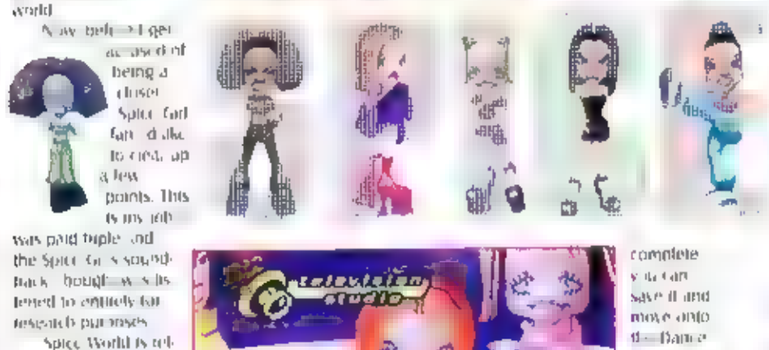
Making music is easy with SPICEWORLD

Now before I get accused of being a closet Spice Girl fan I'd like to clear up a few points. This is my job was paid triple and the Spice Girls sound-track bought with cash destined for research purposes.

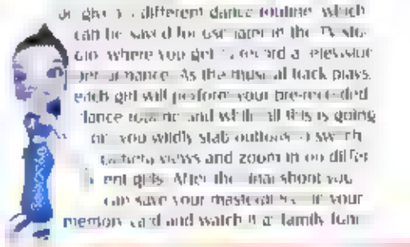
Spice World is not which cheap which immediately creates some scepticism and of course it's cheap it must be rubbish right? Well the answer in this rare bit of generosity is that the Spice World is really quite good and might even be better. Considering the shortcomings of one of the members of the Spice Girls it's not that bad really and for its intended market it is. Proven privileged between 6 and 14 should go down with a storm (sorry).

Two Become One

You start the game by selecting a Spice girl from the lovely assortment on the display rack and begin your own creative journey. Your first task is to go to the back in the mixing room by selecting one of the ten Spice Girls songs on offer. Then by jumping on the different musical sample blocks you can create your very own version of the song using the samples. Persistence does pay off and it isn't essential to get the song perfectly right, the idea here is to be creative. The samples are all excellent quality considering the limitations of the medium they're on and everything sounds great right once your song is complete you can save it and move onto the Dance Studio. Here you must choreograph a new dance routine following the guide by pressing a specific combination of buttons a different dance move is performed each time or give a different dance routine which can be saved for use later in the TV studio where you get to record a television performance as the musical track plays. Each girl will perform your pre-recorded dance routine and while all this is going on you wildly stab out buttons to switch camera views and zoom in on different girls. After the final shoot you can save your masterpiece to your memory card and watch it at family functions. The end result is actually quite good and will have many wannabe pop stars dreaming up pride at their creations.



Ginger enjoying her last moments



Aggravation is an eleven-letter word

There are a few problems that detract from the experience especially because younger players are targeted. These oversights really should have been addressed before release. There is no way to back out of something you've saved so as recording a new track other than pressing the reset button. Also there is plenty of saving to the memory card which can only read a card at a time without superstar maple-swapping by and watching as your Resident Evil 2 saves disappear for ever just to make room for a disgust-ingly gratuitous Spice Girls video. The exclusive Spice Network interactive Magazine offers a few short video segments of interviews with the Spice Girls about their music and other vital information however all was average and the whole thing is too contrived and is far too short to be accused of entertainment but then by failing to be young fun based on the record and sell thru success of the video I think the interactive magazine section will be played many times over.

Overall caution is a requirement when buying this title. It is aimed directly at young Spice Girls fans so if you're looking for a serious challenge forget it whether any sort of scoring system or points of progression this will have limited appeal and little replay value.

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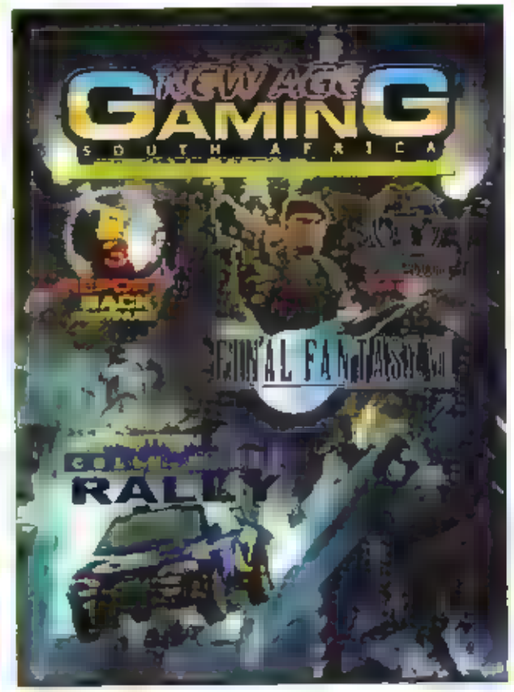

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...ighted we'll look to commercialise the Voodoo 3D accelerators with the Orchid Righteous and it is generally known that the ... Quake engine, the way Quake's developers have implemented it ... graphical knowledge has ... numerous accolades when they entered into the ... games as well as ... and more add-ons as well as ... by companies like Righteous ... manufacturers is ... at the highest level.

Now although a little behind because of the shortages ... finally we received the Orchid's sample. In the package ... Righteous 3D II card ... based on the 3Dfx chipset ... the card has a beautiful ... results in the 3D boys like ... and ... ous issues ... with all ... games ... suffered by ... and ... FPS and ... hardly ... quibble ... playing. Rather we'll point ... the ... issues by the ... of installation ... support issues ... most importantly ... price.

Installation ... Setup has been brought ... a ... Orchid Multimedia Package 3D II, and ... makes it ... ... still ... if the ... ...

The Demo Scene

DEMO'S
THE INSIDE TRACK

PAUL FLEBER DELVES INTO THE UNDERGROUND OF THIS FORGOTTEN ART. – PART 2

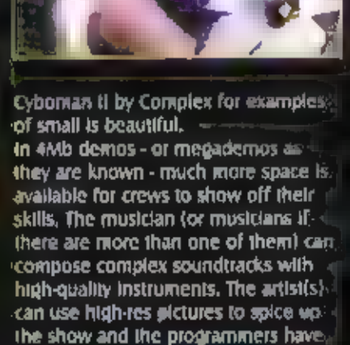
Last month I kicked off the series on demos with a brief overview of what they are and a brief bit of history. This month it's time to have a look at what's under the hood of all demos and the different types. In future instalments, you'll be able to find out how to get started yourself and why exactly it is that many demo people go on to the commercial games industry.

ANATOMY OF A DEMO

Demos begin at the beginning, go on to the end and then stop. Obvious? Not really - demos differ from games in that they require no interaction from the user apart from perhaps setting up some sound-card options at the start. The point is to sit back, enjoy and be amazed. The typical production incorporates many graphical effects in an entertaining manner while playing multi-channel music through your soundcard if you have one. Often the demo will also display some hand-drawn pictures as part of the overall show. In case you've downloaded a few demos and think that you've seen better rendered introductions to games - you're right. Which brings me to a very important point about demos. The effects are nearly all calculated in real-time i.e. as you watch them. A pre-rendered animation may look better, but it is playing back single frames each of which can take minutes or hours to produce. Demos do it as you watch. This leads to an ironic corollary - a slower machine is better to watch demos on since it's only then that you will appreciate just how well-optimised the code really is. Drag out that old 486-50 and be amazed at what demo classic such as Second Reality, Verses and Crystal Dreams II can do with such 'old' hardware.

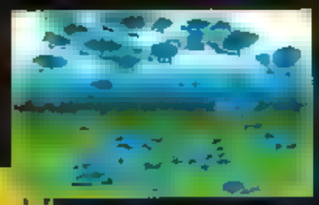
ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

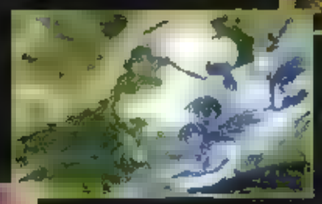
Thanks to the categories imposed at most demo competitions, demos are usually in one of three formats: 4k, 64k and 4Mb. Demos entered in any of these categories may not exceed these maximum sizes although plenty of other productions exist that were released for the fun of it and don't depend on such restrictions. Just in case you didn't get the first one, 4k means what it says - 4096 BYTES. To put the size of this in perspective, a graphical icon 64 pixels square will take up the same space. The very best 4k intros manage to squeeze in 3d graphics and amazing lighting effects and sometimes even soundtracks. Tradition says that 4k intros should be silent but there are notable exceptions. Do a search on www.hornet.org for Animate by Schwartz, Storied by Ms. Stone or Sanction by Omniscience for some of the most impressive examples of 4k intros.



In 64k demo crews have a little more room to play with. Of course, it still takes impressive technical skill to squeeze an entire production featuring graphics, music and the executable code into 65536 bytes. Have a look at Airframe by Prime, Stash by The Black Lotus or Cyborman II by Complex for examples of small is beautiful.

In 4Mb demos - or megademos as they are known - much more space is available for crews to show off their skills. The musician (or musicians if there are more than one of them) can compose complex soundtracks with high-quality instruments. The artist(s) can use high-res pictures to spice up the show and the programmers have the space available to use higher level languages like C, C++ and Pascal to create their production.





Next month we'll look at just how to get started with your own programming. Thanks to the Web, knowledge and resources which once had to be learnt the hard way are now available for anyone with the time and aptitude to get going. By the way, if you were a bit worried about the lack of activity on the SA demo scene Web site, rest assured that matters are in hand to rectify that.

Till the next time...

Maverick

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PROTOSS STRATEGY GUIDE

STARCRAFT

PART 3

***Soul Assassin** raps up the Strategy guide with a debatable alliance with the Protoss Race. Check out South Africa's most comprehensive look at the Starcraft saga.*

To: Chief General Of Military Forces (Presidential Adviser)

Cc:

Subject: Terran & Protoss Alliance

We are proud to inform you, that the Protoss and Terran governments have announced a formal military alliance to combat the threat of the Zerg. I have included a transcription of the Protoss leaders address to his nation after the agreement was signed. We heard that our Satellite installations were under attack at the time and that the broadcast never made it to our people.

"We have come a long way since the days when our creators, the Xel'Naga, walked among us. Their last creation is now the biggest threat to our survival. Not only do they threaten us but also our former enemies. The time has come to put a stop to the tyranny and absolute blood lust of the Zerg.

This alliance heralds a new era in which both our races will live in peace. No longer will our races stand helpless and alone in their struggle against the Zerg. In the past we were enemies but united we will conquer the enemy. As of today we are blood brothers in war and will share our resources and technology in a renewed effort for victory and the utter destruction of the Zerg. Not one must be left standing and their names must be stricken from history.

I am proud that our government has finally stopped bickering about themselves and that our commanders who deserted us during the war have returned to our home planet. If it weren't for their desertion we would still be fighting a war on both fronts. Through their actions we have come to realise that we are no different than the Zerg by waging war on a race whose customs and ideals are different from our own.

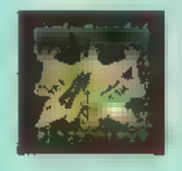
Together we will survive and united we will conquer and destroy all that is Zerg."

He continued to go on about the negotiations and specifics of the alliance but I know that you are only interested in the specifications of they military units and buildings. I have included the document their military adviser made available to us after the agreement was signed. I hope that you find it informative. All of our Commanders should study it in the event that they command Protoss forces. We made a similar document available to them as well. I just hope that this is a wise decision and doesn't come back in the future to haunt us.

Lead Negotiator
Soul Assassin

Nexus

Headquarters of the Protoss army. The Nexus enables the production of Probes for resource gathering. Build as close as possible to resources for faster resource gathering and keep the Nexus well protected at the beginning of a game.



Hitpoints/Shields: 500/300
Cost: 400 Crystals / 0 Gas
Special Ability: Provides 9 Psi Energy

Pylon

One of the most important structures of the Protoss, if not the most important. They provide Psi energy, which is used by units. Most Protoss buildings have to be warped into a Pylon's "area of effect" to get power, the only exceptions being the Nexus, Assimilator and the Pylon itself. Should a Pylon that provides energy to structures be destroyed all those structures will stop functioning until a new Pylon is built, so always protect Pylons in strategic positions if possible.

Hitpoints/Shields: 300/300
Cost: 100 Crystals / 0 Gas
Special Ability: Provides 8 Psi Energy

Assimilator

Used for extracting Vespene and has to be built on a geyser. Never use more than 4 Probes for mining on it, it can only take one at a time so by using more you use a Probe that can be better utilised for mining crystals or building. It is critical that your check you Assimilator every now and again to see how much gas remains. If its depleted move your Probes to a new resource point to mine faster. This is important since Protoss units are damn expensive.

Hitpoints/Shields: 450/450
Cost: 100 Crystals
Requires: Nexus
Special Ability: Extracts Vespene Gas

Gateway

Arguably the most important structure for an early defence. All of Protoss units take a long time to warp in therefore you should have at least two Gateways to produce units. After all your defenses are established consider warping in 2 more Gateways, this way you can replace units that are lost at a faster rate for your main assault.

Hitpoints/Shields: 500/500
Cost: 150 Crystals / 0 Gas
Requires: Nexus
Special Ability: Warp in Templar (Requires Templar Archives)

Forge

A Forge is used for upgrading all your ground weapons and armour as well as your Plasma shield. Delay building a forge or doing any upgrades until after you have established a base defence. The upgrades are important but the money is best used elsewhere in the early stages of a game. When you finally build a forge upgrade weapons first then armour and finally shields, alternatively you can build 3 Forges to upgrade each since the time to upgrade is long.

Hitpoints/Shields: 550/550
Cost: 150 Crystals / 0 Gas
Requires: Gateway
Special Ability: Upgrade Ground Weapons
Level 1: 200 Crystals / 200 Gas - Requires Templar Archives
Upgrade Ground Armour
Level 1: 150 Crystals / 150 Gas
Level 2: 225 Crystals / 225 Gas - Requires Templar Archives
Upgrade Plasma Shields
Level 1: 200 Crystals / 200 Gas
Level 2: 300 Crystals / 300 Gas - Requires Templar Archives

Photon Cannon

The only attack structure available to the Protoss, and it can attack both ground and air units. That being said, you should never use them as a base's main defence, its range is short and can easily be overcome by other races long-range units. Use Photon Cannons in conjunction with other units backed with Shield Batteries for a defence. It is nevertheless an important structure due to its ability to detect cloaked units. Never cluster them around one Pylon, your opponent will simply take out the Pylon to render your group of Photon Cannons useless.

Hitpoints/Shields: 100/100
Cost: 150 Crystals / 0 Gas
Requires: Forge
Special Ability: 5TA Photon Cannon, 20 Damage
5TS Photon Cannon, 20 Damage
Detector

Cybernetics Core

A Cybernetics Core is required to warp in Dragoons and upgrade air units plating and weapons. It also houses the Singularity Discharge upgrade that gives Dragoons greater range. You should build one as soon as possible and upgrade with the Singularity discharge this enables you to warp in Dragoons that can defend your base against air and ground units. Start upgrading your air weapons as well, even before you have warped in air units. The air upgrades take a long time and building two Cybernetics Cores can help speed this up.

Shield Battery

Inexpensive and infinitely useful, they can provide you with a very good defence when used in conjunction with long range units. Shield Batteries will recharge the shields of units instantly by providing 2 shield points for every 1 point of Battery power. Place some Dragoons and Carriers around some Shield Batteries to create a defence that will make an enemy pay with heavy losses. To recharge units quickly select them and right click on a charged Shield Battery, their only downfall is their slow recharge time.

Hitpoints/Shields: 200/200
Cost: 100 Crystals / 0 Gas
Requires: Gateway
Special Ability: Recharge Shields

Robotics Facility

The Robotics facility is important for two reasons. It allows you to warp in Reavers which can do a devastating amount of damage. Reavers can be used for base defence but act just as well for attacks. It also allows you to warp in Observers, which is the only permanent cloaking unit in the game. Observers can also detect other cloaked units. The Robotics facility becomes even more important on maps with islands where you need to quickly warp in some shuttles to expand your territory.

Hitpoints/Shields: 300/300
Cost: 200 Crystals / 200 Gas
Requires: Cybernetics Core
Special Ability: Warp in Reaver (Requires Robotics Support Bay)

Observatory

The Observatory allows you to warp in Observers and houses all their upgrades. Develop the Sensor array as soon as possible this will give Observers the ability to see cloaked units.

Hitpoints/Shields: 550/550
Cost: 50 Crystals / 100 Gas
Requires: Robotics Facility
Special Ability: Provides Sensor Array (300 Crystals / 300 Gas)
Upgrade Observer Speed (100 Crystals / 100 Gas)

Robotics Support Bay

Gives you the ability to warp in Reavers and house their respective upgrades as well as a speed upgrade for shuttles. Upgrade the Reaver's attack damage when you have some spare resources, they are very powerful even without it. The increased capacity upgrade for Reavers is pretty useless since they can build Scarabs almost just as fast as they can fire them, only upgrade if you have the resources to spare.

Hitpoints/Shields: 450/450
Cost: 50 Crystals / 100 Gas
Requires: Robotics Facility
Special Ability: Upgrade Reaver Capacity (200 Crystals / 200 Gas)
Upgrade Scarab Damage (200 Crystals / 200 Gas)

Citadel of Adun

Warp in a Citadel of Adun right after you have finished with your first Cybernetics Core. The Leg Enhancement upgrade for Zealots will give them a tremendous speed boost and make them more manoeuvrable this makes them that much more deadly.

Hitpoints/Shields: 450/450
Cost: 200 Crystals / 150 Gas
Requires: Cybernetics Core
Special Ability: Develop Leg Enhancements (150 Crystals / 150 Gas)

Templar Archives

Enables Templars to be warped into your base. Templars needs a lot of gas for warping so only build the Templar archives when your economy becomes stable and you can afford them. All of the upgrades are important but should have the following preference - Psionic Storm, Hallucination and finally Khaydarin Amulet.

Hitpoints/Shield: 350/350
Cost: 100 Crystals 200 Gas
Requires: Citadel Of Adun
Special Ability: Develop Psionic Storm (200 Crystals 200 Gas)
Develop Hallucination (150 Crystals 150 Gas)
Develop Khaydarin Amulet (150 Crystals 150 Gas)

Stargate

Needed if you are going to build any attacking air units. All of the Protoss air units are VERY expensive and should only be built if there are sufficient resources on the map and you have a good chunk of the action. You need at least two Stargates to build at a reasonable rate but should end up building 4 since the air units take forever to build especially the Carrier. Just remember to upgrade your air units as fast as possible in the weapons department.

Hitpoints/Shield: 600/600
Cost: 300 Crystals 200 Gas
Requires: Cybernetics Core
Special Ability: Build Scout
Build Corsair (Requires Fleet Beacon)
Build Arbiter (Requires Arbiter Tribunal)

Fleet Beacon

Fleet Beacons allow Carrier ships to warp in, giving you probably the most destructive air unit in the game when used in conjunction with Scouts. It also houses a speed upgrade for scout in the form of Gravitic Thrusters. This needs to be developed as soon as possible and afterwards the increased Carrier capacity. Apial sensor gives scouts longer sight and can be left till last since you usually won't send out an expensive Scout to do reconnaissance.

Hitpoints/Shield: 500/500
Cost: 300 Crystals 200 Gas
Requires: Stargate
Special Ability: Develop Apial Sensors (100 Crystals 100 Gas)
Develop Gravitic Thrusters (200 Crystals 200 Gas)
Increased Carrier Capacity (200 Crystals 200 Gas)

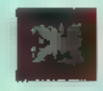
Arbiter Tribunal

Makes the Arbiter available for warping and houses its upgrades. You should only build Arbiters if you have an enormous amount of resources and really need their special abilities, likewise with the Tribunal, only build it if you need Arbiters otherwise leave it be.

Hitpoints/Shield: 500/500
Cost: 200 Crystals 150 Gas
Requires: Stargate Templar Archives
Special Ability: Develop Recall (150 Crystals / 150 Gas)
Develop Stasis Field (150 Crystals 150 Gas)
Develop Khaydarin Core (150 Crystals 150 Gas)

Probe

The workers of the Protoss used to mine Crystals and gas. A probe also does all the building of structures. Protoss has an advantage here in that the Probe only sets co-ordinates for the structures to be warped in and thus can warp in multiple buildings at a time. Early in the game make sure to scout the map with a probe for extra resources, you are going to need it. As you find new resources start mining there, the Protoss is an expensive race to play and every bit helps. When mining on an Assimilator only use 4 Probes, more than 4 is waste of probe power.



Hitpoints/Shield: 20/20
Cost: 50 Crystals / 0 Gas / 1 Pd
Weapon Strength: Particle Beam 5, +0 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Armour 0, +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0 +1 per upgrade

Zealot

Zealot will function as your main defenses in the early stage of game so start pumping them out as soon as possible and keep an eye out for Zergling rushes. Zealots are defenceless against air units and need support in later stages. Dragoons or Scouts make an excellent choice for this task. When used correctly in number, Zealots can be an enemy's worst nightmare when it comes to tower defenses. Take 20 of these natural born killers and mow through towers like butter before you attack with your main force. Remember to upgrade their speed and attack damage before doing this.

Hitpoints/Shield: 80/80
Cost: 100 Crystals 0 Gas 2 Pd
Weapon Strength: Psi Blades 16, 2 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Armour 1, 1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade

Dragoon

Their rate of fire might be slow but when encountered in packs next to a couple of shield batteries with some Carriers they can be a force to be reckoned with. Dragoons' main advantages are their ability to fire at ground and air troops making them excellent base defence units, since the Photon Cannons can't back the job alone. They are excellent at defence but can be used in conjunction with Zealots to take out opponents trying to expand their resource base too close to your base.

Hitpoints/Shield: 80/100
Cost: 50 Crystals / 50 Gas / 2 Pd
Weapon Strength: Photon Blaster 20, +2 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Armour 1, +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade

High Templar

High Templars are a bit on the expensive side but considering what you get for the price, a good deal. Unfortunately they are very vulnerable and should never wander into the open alone. They are best used in numbers casting Psionic Storm on enemies and then converted into Archons to deal out more deadly damage when their power is up.

Hitpoints/Shield: 40/40
Cost: 50 Crystals / 150 Gas / 2 Pd
Weapon Strength: None
Armour Strength: Protoss Armour 1, +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade
Special Ability: Psionic Storm
Hallucination
Archon Warp (Requires Templar Archives)

Psionic Storm

Psionic Storm can devastate a flying army in a matter of seconds once researched. It will however not do any damage to structures making it make a defensive weapon. Due to this you can cast it inside your base without having to worry about destroying your own buildings. Psionic Storm has to be used with caution though since it cannot distinguish between your units and enemy units. Do not cast multiple storms on one spot, the damage inflicted will stay the same. It's wise to keep the extra power for other attacking units on different flanks.

Hallucination

An excellent tool for confusing the enemy and launching a dummy attack while your true force attacks from a different side. A good tactic is to use the hallucination ability on stationary air units and then sending the look alike right into the heart of an enemy's base for reconnaissance. Hallucination can also be used to fool Science Vessels into shielding these drones. This allows Archons to join a battle without having to worry about having their shields drained by EMP Shockwaves.

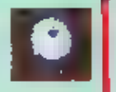
Khaydarin Amulet

Used by two Templars simultaneously to summon an Archon. This is good to use on templars in the heat of battle when they run out of power, this way they can still contribute to the war effort.

Archon

Archons are created when two Templars are joined giving up their lives to summon it. They are probably the most feared Protoss units when encountered. Keep them away from Terran Science Vessels EMP Shockwave will take away their 350 shields with one shot, leaving them with only 10 hitpoints. Archons should be used in numbers and make a great diversion for Templars. The enemy will usually focus on the Archons while you create havoc with Psionic Storm or his troops. They also make great support units for Zealots. If you plan to create an army of Archons make sure you have at least 4 gateways to quickly pump out Templars.

Archon (Cont)



Hitpoints/Shield: 10 / 350
Cost: None Special Ability Of Templars
Weapon Strength: Psionic Shockwave 30, 3 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Armour 0, +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade

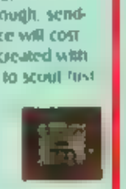
Reaver

Reavers are the most devastating ground units available to the Protoss but come at the price of speed and management. They are very slow and have an attack range comparable to Siege Tanks in Siege mode. Always transport them with shuttles so you can evacuate them if things get tough. Reavers work great in conjunction with Zealots and only do damage with their Scarabs to enemy units. Take your Zealots in for close combat and keep the Reavers just within firing range of the action. Keep a good number of Archons around for this tactic, both Reavers and Zealots are vulnerable to air attacks and will need support. An observer is also a good idea when attacking Terrans in this way to avoid being destroyed by cloaked Wraiths. Reavers will attack any enemy unit within range but will fortunately not pursue them making them ideal for defence as well.

Hitpoints/Shield: 40/100
Cost: 200 Crystals 100 Gas 4 Pd
Weapon Strength: Scarabs 100, 25 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Armour 0, +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade
Special Ability/Cost: Build Scarab 15 Crystals

Shuttle

Used to transport troops around the map. Shuttles make an invaluable asset when using Reavers. They can be used for a tactic known as a Reaver drop. Make 4 shuttles, fill two with Reavers and two with Archons or Dragoons and fly around the map looking for newly established bases without air defence towers. Drop the Reavers and Archons and kill what you can until your enemy becomes aware of the attack and sends in backup units, pick up everyone again and head for a safe area. Good reconnaissance is necessary for this to work though, sending in the shuttles where there are anti-air defenses in place will cost you all your shuttles an expensive unit. Using fake Scouts created with Hallucination can avoid this headache if you send them in to scout first.



Hitpoints/Shield: 60/100
Cost: 200 Crystals 0 Gas 2 Pd
Weapon Strength: None
Armour Strength: Protoss Plating 0 +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade
Special Ability: Transporting Units

Observer

Observers are the single most important unit when there are Terrans around. They can detect cloaked Wraiths and should ALWAYS be included into Scout and Carrier groups. Observers are also good for detecting burrowed Zerg units. They have their own permanent cloaking and is undetectable by normal units without the ability to see cloaked units. Be weary of towers and other units that do have this capability though since Observers have no weapons. A good strategy is to place them over choke points on maps to see approaching enemy units ahead of time. They are also useful for detecting enemy expansion by placing observers over resource points, this works great with Reaver drops since you can destroy the newly found base before it has any defenses.

Hitpoints/Shield: 20/40
Cost: 25 Crystals 75 Gas 1 Pd
Weapon Strength: None
Armour Strength: Protoss Plating 1 +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0 +1 per upgrade
Special Ability: Detector
Cloaking

Scout

Scouts are fast (if you do the speed upgrade) and are equally good for attacking ground and air units alike. The downside is their price, a sizeable amount require a great deal of resources and take a lot of time to warp in. If you plan in building a lot of Scouts or even Carriers for that matter you will need at least 4 Stargates. Scouts are best suited for hit and run tactics on their own. Together with Carriers they can be an

Scout (Cont)

unstoppable power if precautions are taken. Always include an observer in their groups and kill any Zerg Queen you come across, if she ensnares your Scouts be sure some Scourges will follow to kill all of them. Beware of Mutalisks, as well they are very resistant to Scout Anti-Matter missiles.

Hitpoints/Shield: 150/150
Cost: 275 Crystals 125 Gas / 3 Pd
Weapon Strength: Anti-Matter Missile 28, +2 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Dual Photon Blasters 8, +3 per upgrade
Protoss Plating 1 +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade

Carrier

Everybody's favourite airships. Carriers cost and aim an arm and a leg but are well worth the price. They should always be used in conjunction with other units like Scouts and Archons for protection from any form of swarm attack. Before you consider the warping in of Carriers make sure air weapons are upgraded to their maximum and that you have researched the increased Carrier capacity upgrade. This will allow them to hold a total of 8 Interceptors. Carriers work best in groups of 4 or more with some Scouts, one Arbiter and one Observer. Using this combination gives the Carriers valuable time hiding underneath the cloaking of the Arbiter. Carriers can also be used effectively as base defence units or to block off a choke point. To do this you need 2 Carriers and 5 Dragoons and an Observer next to 5 Shield batteries. Just keep the entire unit's shields up and replace lost interceptors. If you can afford to include a Reaver as well.
Keep an eye out for Scourges and opposing Templars they can decimate a Carrier group in seconds.

Hitpoints/Shield: 150/150
Cost: 350 Crystals 100 Gas / 6 Pd
Weapon Strength: Interceptors 6, +1 per upgrade
Armour Strength: [illegible]
Special Ability: Cost Build Interceptor 10 Crystals

Interceptor

Small, cheap and weak, but in numbers the enemy has a difficult time shooting them down. Remember to replace lost Interceptors at their respective Carrier.

Hitpoints/Shield: 80/80
Cost: 30 Crystals / 0 Gas / 0 Pd (Ability Of Carrier)
Weapon Strength: Pulse Cannon 5, +1 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Plating 1 +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0 +1 per upgrade

Arbiter

Arbiters are very useful. Due to their special abilities and cloaking field. They will cloak any nearby friendly unit except for buildings. Arbiters can be used for a variety of tactics, which include hiding your forces underneath them so your opponent can't get an estimate of how big your force really is. Arbiters have a Phase Disrupter as their only weapon and thus need backup from the units it's cloaking from defence.

Hitpoints/Shield: 150/200
Cost: 350 Crystals / 500 Gas / 4 Pd
Weapon Strength: Phase Disrupter 10, 1 per upgrade
Armour Strength: Protoss Plating 1, +1 per upgrade
Protoss Shield 0, +1 per upgrade
Special Ability Cost: Stasis Field 100
Recall 150

Stasis Field

Stasis will freeze a number of enemy units in time giving you an opportunity to get away, or slow down an enemy attack. A good tactic is to freeze your units when they are in trouble and send in reinforcements to come to the rescue. You can even use Stasis on the Arbiter itself. Unfortunately no damage can be done to frozen units they become invulnerable to any form of attack until the spell wears off.

Recall

Recall warps a number of units from any place on the map to where the Arbiter is. One tactic involves having two Arbiters. One close to the enemy's base and one in your base. Gather a small force and use Recall to warp them close to the enemy's base. Launch an attack, take out some units or buildings and then warp your force back to base before enemy reinforcements arrive.

PROTOSS
STRATEGY GUIDE

GENERAL PROTOSS STRATEGIES

Playing the Protoss requires an organised game, there is no time to try this and that strategy. From the get go you need to get recon information in as soon as possible and devise a plan. The reason for this is the sheer cost of Protoss units. You have to get it right and get it right the first time.
Defence, defence, and defence. This is vitally important for the Protoss in the early stages of a game. Make use of the Templars abilities, changing all of them to Archons is a waste. The Psionic Storm and Hallucination is some of the most useful utilities available to the Protoss.
Use a Probe to scout early on and in the later stages use Observers and the Hallucination spell to recon the map and keep an eye on your opponents. If you find an empty resource location, expand immediately every ounce of crystals and gas will be required for success.
Also keep in mind that Probes do not need to attend to a building as it is being warped in and can move on to other building functions. Very rarely will you ever need more than two Probes doing work on your base.
Protoss easily has the best air units in Starcraft and can dominate the airways. A lot of players rely on air power alone. Never fall into this trap, one good strike from an opponent will leave you helpless. Learn how to use air and ground units effectively so that they compliment each other.

BEGINNING AND DEFENSIVE TACTICS

This is one of the many tactics that can be used by Protoss Commanders. It is in no way the best (as there will always be a better way) but the most effective we here at 'New Age Gaming' use. I would also like to point out that with the Protoss there are numerous tactics and players should experiment with all the units to find a strategy that suits their style of play.
The Protoss are very expensive to play and requires a clear plan of action, you can't afford to waste money on tactics that don't work. Their defence takes a while to get up and you should be weary of a rush tactic as this is a favourite way to take Protoss out of a game early on. If you can get past this you can be sure that the Protoss have the most advanced units available and should dominate in long games.
As the Protoss you start off with four Probes and a Nexus situated near some resources. First order of business is four more Probes, start building a Pylon with the first one and send the others to mine. After you have placed the Pylon and there is enough crystals, build a Gateway and then another Probe. As soon as it is done build another Gateway and another Probe. As soon as the first gateway is finished warping in, start pumping out Zealots and Probes, one Probe to every three Zealots until you have nine Zealots. Remember to build Zealots using both Gateways.
Send out a Probe to recon the area for more resources and locate the enemy base while continuing to build Zealots. If there is a choke point blocking your base off from the rest of the map position the Zealots there, even if there isn't try and position your Zealots so they won't be surrounded by Zerglings if attacked.
If no rush is evident you then can continue on to build a more general defence for your base and expand to other resource points. The first you need are some Dragoons, but you require a Cybernetics Core and gas. Build an Assimilator, four more Probes to mine it and then a Cybernetics Core. Warp in six-eight Dragoons to stop early attempts at an air attack and back them with a Shield Battery or two.
From there continue up the tech-tree and warp in the buildings required for your strategy.

OFFENSIVE PROTOSS TACTIC

By this time you should have scouted the enemy bases with Observers or by casting Hallucination on animals or vehicles and using the fakes to take a peek. You will need four Carriers, eight Scouts, two Templars, two Reavers, one Probe, one Observer and an Arbiter if you can afford one. Yet another camping tactic and its best used in 2-4 player games. Find a nice spot just outside of your enemies sight range close to his base and build a Pylon and 4 Photon Cannons. After they have been constructed build 3 Shield Batteries. Place all your troops between these and if you have an Arbiter your opponent will only see the Arbiter, Cannons and some Shield Batteries. Use the Templar's hallucination spell to create some Scout clones and send them into the enemy base faking an attack and wait for him to send some units to counter your offense. When they arrive pull back to the other units and hopefully the enemy units will follow you into an ambush. They should be destroyed in no time. If any of your units take damage make sure to recharge their shields with the Batteries. Your units will be almost invincible. Keep repeating this until you know your opponent is low on resources and men.

If your opponent is wise and doesn't want to send out troops, nail his outer defenses with Reavers just make sure to protect them from air attacks. Sooner or later he will have to do something about it. If he does try to storm you with a bazzillion units, use the Arbiter's stasis ability to freeze a couple of units. First take care of the unfrozen units and by the time the others unfreeze you can take care of them too.
At this point send ten Zealots into the base from the opposite side to what you are attacking. Have them destroy anything with anti-air capability. Once this is done send in your squad of big boys and destroy everything.
When applying this tactic keep an eye out for Zerg Queens, Scourge and the Science Vessels. Kill a Queen on site if she successfully casts ensnare you are in for a lot of trouble from Scourge.
Easy enough but there is a add-on strategy that can be implemented if your budget allows. Have 2 Arbiters if you can afford them, one at the camping spot and one in your main base. If things get tough you can use the recall ability to warp all the troops back to your base.
A couple of points need to be made for this tactic. If you want to use your Templar's Psionic Storm cast it away from your own troops. Secondly make sure your troops don't pursue any escaping units, if this happens a couple might get destroyed. Lastly remember to replace lost interceptors and reload the Reavers.

CONCLUSION

It has been a fun 3 months and I hope many of the new starcraft players have found my guide helpful and even that some of you seasoned veterans picked up a tip or two. If anybody out there has any strategies they would like me to take a look at or has any comments about this piece please email them to me at assassin@nag.co.za or via normal post to the address found on our Backchat page, just address it to SC Guide. I will try and compile a more complete strategy guide with more strategies that I will make available when our web site goes live. I will of course give credit to those strategies that I will use.

Until next month enjoy and keep strategizing.
Soul Assassin over and out!

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PC CHEATS

Outwars

MACLEOD
Immortality (Highlander)
KEYMASTER
Unlimited jet pack fuel
DIRTYHARRY
Unlimited Ammo
BUZZ
Glider wings (As in Buzz Lightyear)
FRAMERATE
Framerate counter
PHANTOM
Spy on creatures using the F11 and F12 keys
SNIPSNIP
Change your player character's gender
GOHOME
Reset to the start position
THRASHER
Thrasher mode (Shows all your enemies on radar)
WEAPONCAM
Weapon optics display. Follows your fired rounds, like the cameras in smart bombs.
BIGEARS
"Placeholder Sounds" On/Off
JUMPXXX
Jumps to the level inserted for XXX. In other words, "jumpossis" jumps to the Oasis level. Known levels that work are: Oasis, Anubis, Ragnarok, Juggernaut and Dead.

SIN - Demo

First press the ~ key (just like in Quake and Q2).
Then enter the code:

/health 999	- Health 999	**/wuss**	- All weapons
/superfuzz	- God mode	**/nocollision**	- No clip mode
/wallflower	- No target		

Commando's : Behind Enemy Lines

Commandos Level Codes

Mission 2:	4JJXB	**Mission 3:**	ZDD1T
Mission 4:	RFF1J	**Mission 5:**	K4TCG
Mission 6:	MIR4M	**Mission 7:**	7QVJV
Mission 8:	K99XC	**Mission 9:**	AAAX1
Mission 10:	JSGPW	**Mission 11:**	CMODD
Mission 12:	JGHD3	**Mission 13:**	PUUWW
Mission 14:	WT348	**Mission 15:**	139P0
Mission 16:	L9IPV	**Mission 17:**	5LIMV
Mission 18:	YJOJG	**Mission 19:**	YFCWJ
Mission 20:	GDKWT		

Your Marine (Diver) can carry two other commandos in his backpack. It means a safer way of transportation, as the Diver cannot be seen while diving. On the other hand, it also could mean if the Diver dies, two of his buddies die with him. How to get two adults in a small backpack? When the Marine is deflating his boat, two commandos have to enter it. It takes a perfect timing but if it works, a small photo of the commando will appear above the backpack of the Marine.

Flight Unlimited II

View mission boundaries:
Press [Shift] + [Alt] + A to view a wire-frame border around the area that your plane must fly over for the mission.
Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle, R1, L1 - then go into the load game menu to switch between levels.

Sub Culture

During the gameplay you can type in these codes:

bedik	God mode
haveall	All missions available
didit	Win mission
wonga	Money
kamikaze	Suicide
tonka	Strengthen hull
refill	Restore shield
mutant	Radiation protection
billy	Speedup
tick	Add geiger counter
rinse	Stage 0
dryer	Stage 1
cotton	Stage 2

Die By The Sword

During the game hold F1 and type in the code:

MUKOR - God Mode
DEADLY - Special Weapon
GOLRG - Giant Player
BTINY - Tiny Players

Incoming

These cheats may not work on all versions of the game. But try them out anyway, by holding down Shift as you type these codes:

HAVEALL	get everything
SUPERDAISY	enemies die with one shot
INVULNERABILITY	um...invulnerability, maybe?
SOLIDASAROCK	also invulnerability
INFINITELIVES	guess
INFINITEWEAPONS	yep, infinite weapons

Incoming also uses the function keys for cheats. Pressing the following keys will turn the corresponding cheats on and off:

Function Key Result
F2 easy shooting F3 invulnerability
F4 infinite lives F5 infinite weapons
F6 smart bomb

Army Men

Press ESC then type in these codes:

Kahuna - Add explosions, omniscient view, and invulnerability
Invulnerable - Invulnerable Sarge
Plethora - Full ammo
Occultation - Stealth mode
Aerobatistics - Full air support
Paralysis - Frozen enemies
Telekinetic - Teleport Sarge (activate scroll mode first)
Triumph - Win scenario
Succumb - Lose scenario
Omniscient - Overall view toggle
Pyromancer - Right button explosion toggle

MechCommander

These cheat codes were created to assist in the development of MechCommander, to allow designers to skip over time-consuming spots and try a wide variety of approaches to the game without hacking into the code. Update MechCommander to version 1.8 if you have not already done so. Create a file called ixtrimcecurt in the directory where you installed MechCommander (most likely C:\Program Files\FasaInteractive\MechCmdr), by making a copy of windows.ini and renaming it. This is the secret file needed to enable the cheats.

Logistics Cheats
These cheats must be typed in during the Logistics Phase.

poundofflesh	Adds 1,000,000 Resource Points.
rockandrollpeople	Removes Drop Weight Limit on current mission.

Gameplay Cheats
These cheats must be typed in during the mission.
CTRL-ALT-W - Jumps to "Mission Sucessful" screen.

osmium	Makes your 'Mechs and vehicles invincible.
lorrie	Repairs damaged Armor/Weapons.
lordbunny	Gives you unlimited, instantaneous artillary strikes. Press b and left-click to nuke the target.
mineeyeshaveseentheglory	Reveals the entire map.
deadeye	Max Gunnery skill on all MechWarriors
framegraph	Not really a cheat, but it's cool and undocumented. Shows a graph of MechCommander's framerate over time.

PLAYSTATION CHEATS

Crime Killer

Crime Killer Passwords

Level	Password
2	Circle, Square, X, Triangle, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Square
3	Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle
4	Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, X
5	Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle
6	Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, X, X, Triangle
7	Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle
8	Square, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, X
9	X, X, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle
10	Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle
11	Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle
12	Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square
13	X, X, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, X
14	X, X, X, X, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, X, X
15	X, Triangle, Square, X, X, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, X, X
End	X, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle

Happy Gaming

Dead or Alive

To unlock Ayane - finish the game in the tournament mode with Raidou to get Ayane.
To unlock Raidou - after you get all of your character new costume finish the game under the default setting to get Raidou.
To get alternate costume: finish the game in the tournament mode under the default settings.

The secret behind the extra config options is revealed! If you beat the game once you will get the first. Then every three hours after that the game will automatically release one after the other. If you complete all of the moves for a character in training mode you will unlock a secret voice option.

Instant Replay
After a round is over, but before the victory pose, press and hold guard (square) and kick (circle), and then press punch (triangle) while still holding the other two buttons; you can then rewind and replay the last segment of the fight to your heart's content by pressing or releasing punch (triangle) and still holding the other two buttons.

Cardinal Syn

Cheat Codes:
Press Right(3), Down, Square when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Juni:
Press Up, Left, Left, Up, Square when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Kahn:
Press Up(2), Down(2), Triangle when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Moloch:
Press Up, Right, Down, Left, Square when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Mongwan:
Press Down(3), Up, Triangle when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Redemptor:
Press Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Stygian:
Press Left, Right, Left, Right, Triangle when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.
Vodu:
Press Left(3), Up, Circle when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. A sound will confirm correct code entry.

Vigilante 8

Note: These moves are to be executed during play and will only work if you have enough of the proper ammunition.

Interceptor Missiles:
Secret Move #1: Halo Decoy
Up-Up-Down-Fire Machine Gun (R2)
Cost: 2 Missiles
Secret Move #2: Afterburner
Up-Up-Up-R2
Cost: 2 Missiles

Bull's Eye Rockets:
Secret Move #1: Road Runner
Up-Down-Down-R2
Cost: 2 Rockets
Secret Move #2: Stampede
Up-Down-Up-R2
Cost: 1-5 Rockets

Sky Hammer Mortar:
Secret Move #1: Turtle Turnover
Down-Down-Down-R2
Cost: 2 Shells
Secret Move #2: Crater Maker
Down-Down-Up-R2
Cost: 1-5 Shells

Bruiser Cannon:
Secret Move #1: Cow Puncher
Down-Up-Down-R2
Cost: 2 Shells
Secret Move #2: Buckshot
Down-Up-Up-R2
Cost: 1-8 Shells

Roadkill Mines:
Secret Move #1: Bear Hug
Left-Right-Down-R2
Cost: 2 Mines
Secret Move #2: Cactus Patch
Left-Right-Up-R2
Cost: 1-6 Mines

Note: You do not need to have the weapon selected to use its special move. You just need it on your vehicle.
All of the codes for all of the secrets, even the alien!
Passcodes: Enter these in at the game status screen.

I WILL NOT DIE - God Mode.

GO SIGHTSEEING - You can choose 0 enemies in arcade mode.

REDUCE GRAVITY - It's like being on the moon.

SEE ALL MOVIES - After putting in this code head to any character in the game status area and hit "X". It will show all the FMV endings for each character.

MONSTER WHEELS - Gives all the cars monster truck tires.

SAME CHARACTER - You can choose the same character in two player mode.

HARDEST OF ALL - Three enemies attack you at once instead of two.

DEADLY MISSLES - Makes your homing missiles do more damage.

WMNNWLHTSCUCLH - Unlocks all the hidden characters and levels. Including Y the alien. Each weapon in the game has two special attacks. These are all of them.

THE END!

It has been one of those months again, too many games and too little time. We also had our first reviewer's LAN game and everyone showed up making it a huge success. We played a little of everything, ranging from Unreal to StarCraft and little Quake 2 CTF thrown into the mix. I think we will be hosting one every months and in the future reserve some seats for some of our readers in the JHB area, but before we think of that we will need to get additional LAN hardware. Hopefully we will take pics this time so I can show you how our scruffy bunch of reviewers look (just kidding).

As promised we will be introducing a **Classifieds section** in our next issue, so start sending in those ads and announcements. We hope that you will find this useful for acquiring some of those rare items and bargain buys everyone is looking for since the Rand plummeted. For more information see our Bits & Bytes section.

Looking into my Crystal ball I foresee **The X-Files Game, Mech Commander, Heart Of Darkness, Dune 2000, and Micro Machines V3.** Please bear in mind that my Crystal ball is a bit temperamental and can be a little bit off, i.e. it depends on customs and shipping delays.

The X-Files game will take gamers for a ride into the unexplained searching for answers. Playing a FBI agent named Craig Willmote you will be assigned to a case where you have to find Mulder and Scully who have mysteriously disappeared without a trace. Craig will get a chance to interrogate suspects, examine evidence and do all the usual detective stuff. X-Files fans can look forward to interacting with a bunch of other personalities from the series as well. The game supposedly has some of the best quality FMV sequences available to date, but that remains to be seen.

We will also be taking a look at **Mech Commander** from Microprose who now has the official FASA Interactive seal of approval. Starting with a couple of MechWarriors gamers will be given the opportunity to play various missions and retake planet Port Arthur from the Black Smoke Jaguar Clan. All of the action will take place in the world of Battletech.

Every strategy sim enthusiast should remember Dune 2 from yesteryear, the granddaddy and pioneer of all modern RTS games. It has been revamped and spruced up graphically while maintaining the old style of play. Now called **Dune 2000**, it promises to bring the futuristic fantasy sci-fi world of Frank Herbert to RTS games everywhere. This time around it will be distributed on CD-ROM and not floppies, like the original (hehehe the good ol' days), it will surely bring back some fond memories for those who played Dune 2.

Being released for the PlayStation and PC is the adventure/platform game **The Heart Of Darkness**. You play as Andy, a teenage boy, who is terrified of the dark and likes to daydream. His dog, Whisky, adores him but unfortunately gets kidnapped by the forces of darkness. Andy then has to face his fears to save his doggy pal. From the looks of the demo movie we have here, Heart of Darkness has potential but the final verdict lies in the gameplay.

Finally we will be reviewing a game based on little cars that we all use to play with, but never admit to. **Micro Machines V3** has 48 3D courses ranging from breakfast tables to science labs. According to our local distributor the game will allow up to 8 players to join the fun. I am definitely looking forward to reviewing this one.

As always we wish that everyone enjoyed this issue. If you have any comments please send them to comments@nag.co.za and remember to keep sending those letters, we thoroughly enjoy reading them.

Till next month, keep fraggin, kickin butt, strategising and playing games. Cheers!

(NAG Team passes out.....)

The Heart Of Darkness

EARTHWORM JIM 3

the good
the bad
and the groovy

The worm is back! Check out the ever popular annelid, Earthworm Jim, as never seen before - in 3D! Jim has lost his mind - literally! Whilst filming the opening trailer for a new Bond-type film, he is knocked unconscious by a falling cow and transported into the madcap world of his own mind.

PC CD-ROM

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